

OUR EDUCATION

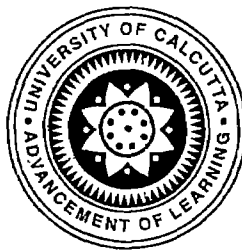
JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL IDEAS AND RESEARCH

VOLUME : 8



Editor

Pranab Kumar Chakrabarti



2007

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CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

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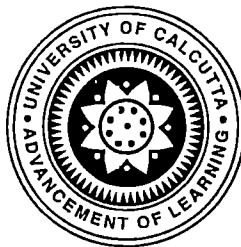
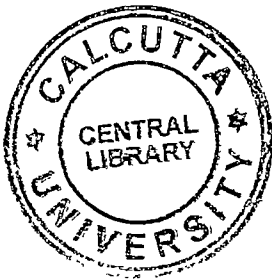


Editor

Pranab Kumar Chakrabarti

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Volume: 8

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Editorial Note

The seventh volume of Our Education (2005) actually rolled out of press in 2006. After about two year the journal is being resurrected and the eighth volume (2007) is now being handed over to the readers most humbly and with much hesitation. The publication is two years behind schedule but is there any real excuse? Most likely friends will not mind for an excuse and others will not believe. But as editor of the consecutive volumes of Our Education I feel obliged to cite one or two issues on behalf of the Department of Education which explain the cause of delay in the publication. However, these issues are repetitions of what was stated in the editorial notes of earlier volumes.

First, contributions to our journal in the form of good research paper are not regularly coming to the editor's desk. It is not due to the fact that many journals of educational research are published frequently in our region. Nor it is due to the lack of research potentialities in so many under graduate and B.Ed. Colleges. Why the scholars and teacher are so miserly in research productivity is in itself a subject of research. The Department of Education may search for the reasons.

Second, the circulation of Our Education still remains deplorably poor. I do not find any reason why at least 100 copies of our journal are not subscribed every year. These two issues are interdependent because, if the journal is widely circulated, more research paper are likely to be contributed, and if good research papers are published every year in adequate number, its value as a reference material will improve substantially so that many more teachers and scholars will be encouraged to subscribe. I think the Department of Education can take the initiative in this line because I still believe that the journal may be a good platform for research and academic communication. As for example, changes in the syllabus, important decisions concerning teaching learning, news of seminar, symposia may find place in a section of the journal for which all people concerned will be encouraged to collect a copy.

An encouraging event was the National Seminar on Contemporary Research in Education held in the Department during December 5-6, 2007. It was a well managed seminar and was represented by scholars from different parts of India, true to the spirit of a national seminar.

I think the next volume of Our Education may Publish selected research papers of good quality presented in the seminar or even, one full volume of Our Education may be dedicated for that purpose.

For a healthier, regular and widely circulated journal of educational research, I suggest that the senior teachers, who have regular contact with other universities, colleges and institutions for mandatory administrative and academic functions, may try to popularise the journal, encourage subscription and contributions. Apart from the budgetary allocation for printing the journal a small amount may be spent for publicity and postal expenses. University website may also be used.

The eighth volume of Our Education comprises two sections. In the first section seven papers have been selected two of which are theoretical and five are on the basis of empirical research. The second section comprises three articles. The sources of the contents are not duly supported by references in these articles. But still these are being printed to encourage the contributor to true research.

Pranab Kumar Chakrabarti
Editor

Learning Environment, Engineering and Quality Education

P. C. Biswas*

Abstract:

The article attempts to analyze quality education from the angle of life-skills development theorized by UNICEF (2000) and suggests some heuristics taking cues from both pedagogical and andragogical principles for building appropriate learning environment.

Prologue to Quality Education

Education, without any controversy, is necessary for life for all. It is said that drama of education for 'becoming' involves more clients, stakeholders, time, space and other resources whereas education for 'being', true liberal education aspired by humanity, is trailing behind. Equating holistic education i.e. education for fullness to quality education, is an elusive term and the 'centre' [dominant economic and cultural forces] is advocating its advancement looking *human progress* through its own lenses and strongly guided by own belief-systems for the benefits and empowerment of the 'periphery' as a matter of 'sympathy' which has its own vocabulary, beliefs, cultural tools, aspiration, curriculum of life, meaning of learning & knowledge and pedagogy that hardly match with the central advocacy. There, then, exists a center – periphery conflict and context/culture-specific 'quality' education does not appear as a necessary Utopia. The center-periphery conflict may be resolved through transactional analysis and/or critical dialogue if appropriate learning environment engineering for harnessing 'education for all' and safe-guarding sustainable human development in the 21st century is looked forward.

Searching as well as striving for quality education as the most powerful lever for both individual and collective development, is not new phenomena in the history of mankind but it has been felt utmost necessary now for multiple reasons – information explosion, shorter half-life of knowledge, borderless workstation of man whose destiny is assumed to be underpinned by seven-fold conflicts – between global vs. local, universal vs. individual, tradition vs. modernity, long-term vs. short-term consideration, needs for competition vs. concern for equality of opportunity, extraordinary expansion of knowledge vs. man's capacity to assimilate, spiritual vs. materials, (Delor's Report, 1996). 'Quality education', then, cannot be defined by a set of universal parameters rather it is needed a relativistic paradigm describable by a three-dimensional model – individual, context & time and their interactions which are dynamic in nature. *A 'new look' is demanding. This is achieved through a process of criticality – in this approach, the teacher refuses to be an expert and tries to learn as much as the students. Experiences are shared amongst the peer group and there is an emphasis on the themes of daily life in educational discourse.* Long ago Sri Aurobinda in his vision

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on tomorrow's integral education saturated with the eastern thoughts smartly advocated for quality education and instruction and realized that the teacher is also a student.

Quality in education is a baffling issue. Three criteria of quality education might be set on:— **Rights, Equity and Relevance**. UNICEF's paper titled *Defining Quality in Education* (2000) articulated confidently **five dimensions of quality: learners, environments, content, processes and outcomes**. Article 29(1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child prescribed creation of environment that will positively support and carefully facilitates **five faces of child development**: (a) *development of the child's personality, talent and abilities to the fullest extent*; (b) *development of respect for human rights and freedom*; (c) *development of respect for the child's parents, his/her own cultural identity, language, values*; (d) *preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society in the ethos and* (e) *spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, friendship among all people who maintain variations*. Focusing on the theme of Child-centered approach to learning and teaching, the very idea though well spoken by all educators, the said document has attempted to strike a balance between the socio-cultural realities of the learners, to their aspirations and the well being of the nation. Moreover, learning aided by the child's own psycho-cultural tools and mediated by active actions of the teacher, what Vygotsky has addressed as ZPD [zone of proximal development] are to be looked forward. Further, learning should be emancipatory in nature that allows students to find their own voices (Freire, 1978). Consequently, this relativistic approach to learning emphasizes the perceptions, aspirations, experiences and needs of those involved in the learning environment emanating personal experiences to determine quality assessably in multiple dimensions each set by each stakeholder of comprehensive education. It is needless to advocate that this dimensional approach may not be implemented just by grafting these ideas in the existing systems merely through information dissemination by cascade mode, it requires some systems thinking as well as systems engineering that will ensure a paradigm shift extending learning space.

Conditions for Quality Education

In sum, the drama of learning just articulated above shall be enacted in the environment where –

- Learner is the main actor in the theatre of teaching–learning;
- Learners play active role in defining their curriculum and therefore, standardized, externally prescribed and controlled curricula should be rejected;
- A curriculum focuses on critical social power relations and the ways in which formal knowledge is created and transmitted;
- Local design of curricular content materials are recognized and used;
- Evaluation and assessment are integral to the learning process;
- Learning space is expanded by inviting and recognizing additional spaces–self–learning, peer–learning and cooperative learning, even sometimes beyond the classroom periphery;

- Learning must be a process of social constructivism – identification of cultural tools and then discovering knowledge in context for development of psychological tools of further learning;
- Learners are the constructors of meaning for themselves;
- Didactic pedagogies should replace active participation by the learners in the design of their own learning;
- Teacher is an active learner as well as a facilitator of pupil learning;
- Teachers' role is more that of facilitator / mentor / counselor than instructor from the behaviourist model;
- A place (school) that facilitates development of healthy environment for all;
- A synthesis of pedagogical and andragogical principles should give future model of teaching–learning.

Supportive Environment vis-à-vis Education through Life Skills Development

Quality education outcomes of learning may be enveloped in the form of changes in linguistic behaviours, performative behaviours, expressive behaviours; empowerment of psychological tools; and interactions of the above in and through use of scaffolding, apprenticeship and mediation- both human and symbolic. **Ultimate goal of pupil learning is development and continuous refreshing contextual “life skills”** related to the entire spectrum of their survival as well as well being in context of others in the global society of today. The spectrum of educational goals includes knowledge about health, nutrition and hygiene; development of sympathy as well as empathy, superior coping skills for optimal self-control, emotional turmoil, balance; and full functioning and utilization of cognitive as well as meta-cognitive competencies. Specifically, life skills encompass skills of cooperation, negotiation and communication, decision-making and critical and creative thinking in preparation for the challenges of modern life in order to make child prepared to deal with people and situations they encounter on the streets, and in the fields, helping them manage finances, interact in social and family dynamics, appreciate their own rights and respect those of others. Life skills become more vital in adolescence when the risks of exploitative, child labor. HIV/ AIDS, drugs and difficult behavioural choices. A harmonious functioning of head, hand and heart in context of child's material and socio-cultural environments for the puposes of individual and collective survival, protection development and participation is called for in a truly supportive environment.

Characteristics of a supportive academic environment as looked by UNICEF (1999) and others, may be delineated as:

- A place of safety,
- A place of essential health-related facilities,
- A place of optimum healthcare provisions,

- A place of health habits (some life skills) development including practices of education (i) for personal well being-physical, mental emotional & social mental and (ii) for well being of others,
- A place (school) that initiates and sustain interactive environment for pupils' self-realization, self-expression, self-actualization in the context of holistic human development, and arrest barriers to learn, to create and to be; discrimination of any sort and degree, disrespect for child's human rights,
- A place without any barrier to or bracket for any learner,
- Curricular materials must be culture-specific and life-centric,
- Distance (in all available meanings) between home and school must be minimum,
- A place, which encourages pupil to ask questions and to discover or innovate,
- A school that facilitates 'learning to learn'.

Our Beliefs [Misconception?] about School Learning

Building and ensuring such supportive school/learning environment are not a smooth run. Some obstacles and barriers intervene between the platform of existing conditions and the platform to attain. People generally look at the obstacles in the available infrastructure, facilities and other human resources and the planners and leaders attempt at system improvement, so far as possible, and thereby terms like restructuring and/or re-organizing the system, DPEP, Operation Blackboard, PWD Act, NCTE Act, EFA, etc have been coined and taken care to supply fuel to move. These are only one side of the coin that portraits removing obstacles. The other side is a store house of barriers of many hues and momentum, but mostly invisible even to the professionals and teachers. These barriers are much more powerful and detrimental for systems engineering for building supportive learning climate for anchoring holistic quality education. Some barriers in the form of our traditional beliefs, though they are really misconceptions, are:

1. Learning/knowledge is locked in the textbook only.
2. The key to that lock remains in the mind and authority of the teacher.
3. Education means banking concepts what teacher delivers and distributes.
4. Superior education means only higher grades, neither expansion of mind nor restructuring cognitive structure.
5. Classroom mantra is "keep silence, don't talk".
6. School rules display mainly "what not to do".
7. Learning a material means learning by heart, memory work or act of a slave, not growth of the learner.
8. A good student does / responds / performs when the teacher asks him / her to do.
9. The classroom culture is looked as homogeneous though pupils come from different homes signifying multiculturalism.

10. Good student is only an attentive listener, not question raiser.
11. Pupils' spontaneous spark of free of expression ideas and flexibility in thinking are under-valued in learning space.
12. Algorithms are prized, not heuristics.
13. Valuing a culture of regimentation equates good classroom management
14. Classroom teaching approaches to a middle/average level of intellect.
15. Curriculum is invisible to all (teacher & students); textbook (generally authored by mediocre persons) is treated as embodiment of all concerned information bank
16. The reality of 'natural individual variations among students' has no correspondence in classroom actual practices.
17. Sparks of creativity in children are generally frowned at.
18. Knowledge is sacred and a stable entity; the learners can neither create nor modify it.

In the sense of the banking concept of education' (Freire, 1993) summary of the above misconceptions may be: *the teacher teaches and the students are taught; the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing; and the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher.*

Other Barriers to Change

- Material and physical facilities-scarcity and many times under-utilization
- Traditional beliefs about teaching learning and roles of student and teacher.
- Ego of teacher/parents/other stakeholders – I/We are right/correct, they are wrong/incorrect”.
- Linguistic barriers as well as cultural barriers.
- Cascade model used for de-skills and re-skill teachers.
- Distance between school and home in terms of school community linkage.
- Mismatch between teacher and parents in respect of perceptions of the meaning of quality education.
- Uncritical belief in use of one-way informational system in classroom.
- Approved curriculum and materials for all learners.
- Conflicts exist between 'centre' and 'periphery' in designing curriculum, formulating objectives and suggesting pedagogy to be followed.
- Schoolroom activities designed for grade/marks.

Education for Empowerment: Environmental Engineering

That the poor physical infrastructure, inadequate facilities, finances, man powers, etc are contrary to promotion of good learning environment have been recognized and the concerned

school managers and the government policies on public education are toiling hard for a long period. Systematic ventures through DPEP, Operation Blackboard and lately SSA are on gear, hopefully some positive changes have already been effected everywhere. In the SSA the invisible lacuna remain and act as a negative catalyst in the chemistry of supportive learning environment either in the existing schools or in the specially set up centers of learning-SSK. The need of the hour for expanding horizon of interactive learning space some planned changes are being advocated for:

- Melting down of classroom passivity-inviting activity.
- Transformation of learner from mere listeners' role to main actor's role.
- Facilitating integration of cognition with emotion-use of emotional logic in the social space of learning.
- Emphasizing cooperative learning-directed inquiry and discovery.
- Ensuring cooperation of peers as the necessary condition for development of reflective abilities.
- Recognizing peer-cooperation modes-whole-class discussion and small-group discussion expand learning space.
- Discouraging non-learning formula: "I do not know. I cannot do it. Show me how."
- Encouraging formula for learning activity: "I do not know. I will be able to do it if/when I learn the following."
- Three conditions that are necessary to draw forth the student's initiative in formulating a hypotheses: (1) A special way of introducing the subject matters – through the most general notions, which potentially include a conceptual system describing the given subject matter, out line the potential prospects. (2) a special nominative way of interacting with adults, student must not anticipate ready solutions, (3) a special positional way of interacting with peers ensured by joint work. [Heron 1992, p. 197]
- Bringing classroom experiences more closer to life at community.
- Monitoring continuous comprehensive evaluation of outcomes in three dimensions - Achievement, Attainment & Standards
- Utilizing existing psychological tools of learners as learning is enhanced when teachers [facilitators] pay attention to the knowledge and beliefs that learners bring to a learning task, use this knowledge as a starting point [prior psychological tools] for new instruction, and monitor students' changing conceptions as instruction proceeds.
- Making learning as an interactive and participative (dialectical) approach to qualitative transformation of psychological tools.
- Recognizing that effective education is possible for all by creating comfortable, stimulated and engaging environments.

Some Heuristics for Appropriate Environment Building

- (a) *Provision for Physical Infrastructure and Facilities and removal of barriers to learning for all.*
- (b) *Designing Learning Materials and Media for Communication*
- (c) *Orientation of parents and other stakeholders.*
- (d) *Learning Environment Engineering.*

Classroom does not remain in a social vacuum. Changes in classroom environment must have resonance with appropriate changes in home (both the parents), school managers of all levels and of course in teacher education and recruitment and appraisal. Of particular, some heuristics are being presented in relation to teacher-relevant learning environment building strategies.

(i) Engaging in Facilitation

Critical pedagogy is the broader area to be explored for initiating and sustaining learning experience in the post-modern classroom. Naturally, teacher's expected role will be that of a facilitator. Facilitation is the educational skills of accessing the phenomenological world of the learner in the classroom contextualized in social and cultural variables and helping learners get in touch with their internal capacities to learn and to make sense of their experiences.

- Learning aided by facilitator is self-directing, self-monitoring and self-correcting.
- Facilitator acts as guide helping participants [learners] explore their own-self knowledge, transpersonal and social knowledge.
- Facilitation is concerned with the psychological growth of the learners and does not deliver static knowledge.
- Facilitation believes in dialogical relationship where knowledge is co-constructed by the person called facilitator.
- Facilitator needs have Authority, Confrontation, Care, Range of methods, Orientation, Respect for persons, Flexibility of style.
- Six dimensions of a model of facilitator (Heron, 1999) are – Planning, Meaning, Confronting, Feeling, Structuring and Valuing.

Main factors influencing facilitation are internal cultural environment/group context, the social and psychological contracts, the wider culture [both institutional and environmental, the facilitator styles and the model of facilitation.

(ii) Pedagogy of Group/Cooperative Learning

Another design for learning environment that can be explored is a set of new approaches underpinned by collaborative and cooperative learning (Cooper & Robinson, 1997) or sometimes-called peer learning (Heron, 1974, 1992). In sum peer learning upholds the notions:

- Education of the whole person, especially education of the affect-emotional competence;
- Educated person is self-directing, self-monitoring and self-correcting;
- Two fundamental principles of parity [cooperation] are equality of consideration and equality of opportunity;
- Participative evaluation of course objectives;
- Peer-learning community emphasizes much on group process and high degree of personal challenge for participants;
- Teacher-student distinction is secondary, interpersonal learning is the key area;
- It is necessary to have one or more facilitators;
- Course design is consultative.

In fine, the conditions of Cooperative Learning, as listed bellow, bring forth cooperative relationships set on the five basic elements – true of peer tutoring, partner learning, peer mediation, child-adult work groups, families, and other cooperative relationships.

1. Clearly perceived positive interdependence
2. Considerable promotive (face-to-face) interaction
3. Clearly perceived individual accountability and personal responsibility to achieve the group's goals
4. Frequent use of the relevant interpersonal and small-group skills
5. Frequent and regular group processing of current functioning to improve the group's future effectiveness.

Gradually and step by step, the envisaged environmental engineering should be open enough to incorporate the 'first principles of instruction' (Merrill, 2000) [problem centered, activation of prior experience, demonstration application and integration] and multi-channel learning or tacit knowledge thus developed. Ultimately, learning environment should empower a child for knowledge management in the information era.

Epilogue:

Providing appropriate environment for quality pupil learning is essential for sustainable human development. The issues and concerns towards this agenda are complex to analyze and difficult to attain but never impossible to negotiate smartly. It is challenging too. No universal design can be panacea for all. Contextual optimum solutions are emerging in our post-modern contemporary world. Their solutions cannot be implanted in our systems. It is mainly the teachers to evolve context-specific new pedagogic models and also act as catalyst to make appropriate changes linking school and community closer and collaborative.

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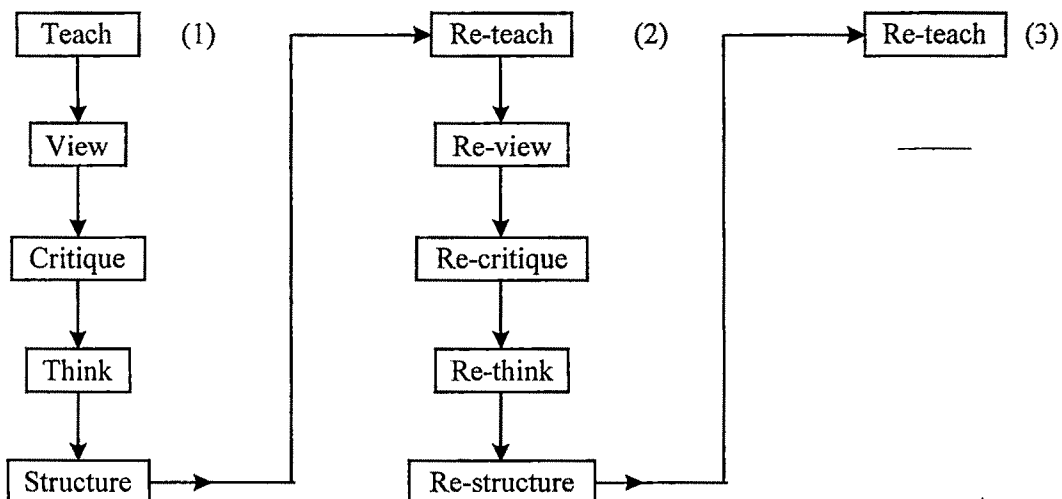
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Development of Questioning skill by Microteaching

Rafique Ahmed and Rita Sinha***

With advancement of the world the society is facing with more new complexities. Similarly teaching is a complex activity, carried out in the complex situation of the school by complex organisms human beings (teachers) directed towards more complex organisms (students), who are constantly under-going complex changes. But its effect is not good in the field of teacher education system. In this context, Microteaching is an improved method of teacher training.

Microteaching has been defined by Allen and Eve (1963) as a system of controlled practice that makes it possible to concentrate on specific teaching behaviour and practice teaching under controlled conditions. It follows a complete Micro-session steps.



Micro-Session Steps

In this article a study (experimented by the above mentioned experimenters) deals with how to develop the Questioning skill by Microteaching particularly at three levels of questioning i.e. knowledge, understanding and application levels.

Questioning skill is very important aspect of teaching and it has great significance. Questions are asked in order to arouse motivation in the students and it recapitulates the lesson learnt and to fix it securely and clearly in the mind of the pupils. Questions are also asked to increase self-confidence among the students. This questioning skill can be successfully developed through Microteaching.

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** Dr. Rita Sinha – Professor, Department of Education and Dean Faculty of Education, C.U.

Knowledge includes recognition or recall of ideas, material or phenomena. Understanding includes fullest grasp of a material questions which leads to understanding of the subject matter. Questions which pertain to application of the learnt material are known as application level question.

Objectives of the study were (i) to find out whether there is any difference in the development of Questioning skill in the traditional teaching and microteaching groups; (ii) to find out whether there is any difference in the development of knowledge type of questions in traditional teaching and microteaching groups; (iii) to find out whether there is any difference in the development of understanding type of questions in traditional teaching and microteaching groups and (iv) to find out whether there is any difference in the development of application type of questions in traditional teaching and microteaching.

The Null hypothesis is there would be no significant difference in the total number of questions, knowledge level questions, understanding level questions, application level questions in the traditional teaching group and microteaching group.

The teacher-trainees of a B.Ed. College were selected for the study. Ten student-teachers were selected for teaching each subject (each group). Five student-teachers taught in each group.

After selecting two groups they were taught by two teaching methods i.e. traditional teaching and Microteaching method. Questioning skills were developed at three levels in both the groups. Experimenters then evaluated and compared Questioning skills between two groups. After administering the experiment thus the experimenters collected desired data.

During the experiment a few observation schedule had been used to note teacher's talks. From those observation schedule experimenters categorized three levels of questions of five subjects and added total number of questions.

Group:		Stage							
T.T./M.T.	Level	Item							Total
	K	✓	✓	✓	✓				= 4
	U	✓	✓	✓					= 3
	A								= 0

Here T.T. for Teacher Talks.

K - knowledge level questions.

U - Understanding questions

A - Application level questions.

Group means - Traditional teaching group/M.T. groups/Control groups / Experimental groups.

Stage means - Traditional teaching Practice Stage/T.T. evaluation stage /M.T. practice stage / M.T. Re-teach stage/M.T. Evaluation stage.

Observation Schedule - 1

Observation schedule for total number of questions of five subjects at three levels of questions at a glance.

Table-1

	No. 1			No. 2			No. 3			No. 4			No. 5			
	History			Geography			Life Sc.			Bengali			Math			Total
Level	K	U	A	K	U	A	K	U	A	K	U	A	K	U	A	
T.T.	4	5	2	7	3	2	7	4	3	6	5	2	6	5	4	65
M.T.	8	10	4	7	9	4	9	11	6	8	9	3	5	9	6	108

Observation Schedule - II

After that a t – value of total number of questions and t value of each level of question (here three levels) had been worked out from suitable t -test. Lastly interpreted the t – value significance at .01 and .05 level of confidence. t – value of table-2 was 6.32 at the .01 level of confidence, Table-3 was 2.93 at the .05 level of confidence, Table-4 was 9.27 at the .01 level of confidence and t -value of Table-5 was 3.68 at the .01 level of confidence. All t -value were significant at .01 and .05 level of confidence consequitively.

Table-2

The t -test for experiemental group and control group of total nos. of questions of five subjects.

Groups	Experimental	Control
N	5	5
M	21.6	13
SD		2.16
SED		1.3608
Difference in Means		8.6
T		6.32*

*Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table-3

The t-test for experimental group and control group of knowledge level questions of five subjects.

Groups	Experimental	Control
N	5	5
M	7.4	6
SD	1.38	
SED	.8694	
Difference in Means	1.4	
T	3.68*	

*Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table-4

The t-test for experimental groups and control group of understanding level questions of five subjects.

Groups	Experimental	Control
N	5	5
M	9.6	4.4
SD	.89	
SED	.5607	
Difference in Means	5.2	
T	9.27*	

*Significant at the .01 level of confidence

Table-5

The t-test for experimental group and control group of application level question of five subjects :

Groups	Experimental	Control
N	5	5
M	4.6	2.6
SD	1.14	
SED	.7182	
Difference in Means	2	
T	2.79*	

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The findings were that the total number of questions total number of knowledge level, understanding level and application level questions were significant at .01 and .05 level of confidence. So, it may be concluded that it is possible to develop the questioning skill by microteaching technique.

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Child Labour: Its Magnitude And Strategies for Control

Mita Banerjee and Shabana Haydar*

The demand for removal of and action against Child Labour is becoming stronger. The problem has become a global challenge, rising resolution for basic human rights. World Declaration in 1990 and commitment of the nations to an action plan to implement the United Nation Convention on the rights of the child 1989 have emboldened the movement against child labour practices. It is universally accepted that children should not be made to work. But there are no comprehensive answers as to why the problem, persists and how it can be tackled.

Child labour is the work done by children from poor households outside their home for a minimal wage. Children are thus subject to exploitation, working outside their home by greedy and exploitative employers. Child Labour is perceived to be an economic necessity for poor household and is not a new phenomenon to our age. What is new is its perception as a social problem the world over. The International Labour Organisation says, "It is not concerned with children helping in family farms or doing household chores." It "include children leading permanently adult lives, working long hours for low wage, under conditions damaging to their health and physical and mental developmental, sometimes separated from their families frequently devoid of meaningful education and training opportunities that could open up to them a better future.

The World Bank argues Child Labour is different from Child Work, not all Child Labour is harmful. Many working children who are within a stable and nurturing environment with parents or under protection of a guardian can benefit in terms of socialization and from informal education and training. The issue of child labour is not merely a question of whether work done by a child is exploitative and remunerative or not. All kinds of work are bad for children. Children should be at school and not at place of work, the work done by these children is not suited to their young age and the condition in which they work and live are detrimental to their well-being and safety. All children who are out of school should be considered actual, or potential child Labourers and being out of school as a denial of child's right to education.

Child labour is work that is done by children under the age of 15, which restricts or damages physical, emotional, intellectual, social or spiritual growth as children. Labour which is intolerable or harmful to children or which denies them their right to fully develop, to play or to go to school. The ILO estimates that there are 250 million children world wide between the ages of 5 and 14 years of age who are now working, half of them full time.

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Child labour is:

- Work performed by young children generally under the age of 14 and in most cases 15.
- Long hours of work on a regular or full time basis.
- No or insufficient access to education or lack of attendance to school.
- Abusive treatment by the employer.

Children work in a wide variety of areas that can be dangerous and exploitative. These include, but are not limited to :

- Agricultural fields and farms : 75% child labourers work in agricultural related activities
- Domestic Services : 20–60% of working children are girls in domestic services. They are extremely vulnerable to physical, mental and sexual abuse.
- > Mines
- > Factories, making carpets, clothes, glasses, matches, fireworks etc.
- > Brick quarries
- > Street vending
- > Garbage dumps, collecting items to sell
- > Soldiers
- > Prostitution

Child Labour can broadly be defined as that segment of the child population which participates in work either paid or unpaid. Child Labour very broadly and inclusively includes all working children below the age of 15.

1983 report estimated to following configuration:

- The total child labour population was estimated at 43.79 millions which represented 36.7% of children between the ages 5 and 15.
- Of these the rural sector accounted for 74.84% and the Urban sector 16.26%.
- Most child labourers estimated rural based did not receive income. Overall the North registered a low of 2% children earning income, the south a high of 10%.
- Girls generally outnumbered boys in the west zone by a significant margin.
- A majority of working children in rural areas were illiterate in urban areas. Overall 64% of working children were illiterate.
- At least 80% of child labourers came from ST/SC. Children working mostly in industries like carpet making and gem polishing.

There are three types of bonded labour that exist as practiced all over the world. The first type involves a child inheriting a debt carried by his/her parents. Another form of child labour occurs when a child is used as collateral for a loan. A parent facing an unusually large or urgent expense would use this method to obtain necessary money. A worker can also enter into bondage to their employer by requesting an advance or future wages they expect to earn.

Magnitude of the problem in India

The problem of child labour in India is also of immense magnitude when one considers the number of children involved. According to 1971 census there were 10.74 million children working, representing 4.66% of total population and 5.95% of total labour force. According to 1981 census workers in the age group below 14 years of age (excluding Assam) were 13.59 million. On the basis of the National sample survey 32nd (round) the number of child workers as on 1st March, 1983 was 17.36 million. The working children mainly belong to the age group 5-14 years. Nearly 93% of the total child labour force works in the rural areas and the rest in urban areas. A great majority of these children work in agriculture and the unorganized sector like small commercial establishments and shops or quasi family undertakings. 79% are employed as cultivators or agricultural labourer, 8% in livestock, forestry, plantation and other services and rest in trade, commerce and transport.

According to the report prepared by the Indian Social Institute on child labour 80% of all child labourers belong to SC/ST consequently they become subject to deprivation of possibility of education and the consequent upward mobility under Indian law wholesale and unchecked exploitation of children of less than 14 years is a punishable crime. However in India every 3rd child is working child and every 4th child in the age of 5-15 is employed. ILO puts the number of child worker in India at 44 million but as unofficial survey estimates the working of children at around 100 million.

According to the 43rd round of the National Sample Survey (1984) the number of working children was estimated to be around 20 million. According to Indian census of 1991, there are 11.28 million working children under the age of 14 years in India. Over 85% of the child labour in the country is in rural areas engaged in agricultural activities. Estimates of the Ministry of Labour state that the figure is 17 million of which child labour 2 million are engaged in hazardous occupation. According to the 1991 census data there were 203 million children in India aged 6-14 years. It is estimated that number of children in the school going age group would be at least 220 million. Out of those 220 million, 112 million go to formal school, 7 million to non-formal schools and the remaining 100 million + children are out of school. India with close to 30% of the population urbanized. Urban child labour accounts for only 5.5% of the entire child labour in the country.

Abolition of Child labour

Article - 14: of the Indian constitution states, "The state shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years". Article - 21: of the Constitution of India guarantees the right of life and liberty. Indian Supreme Court has interpreted the right of liberty to include many other things, the right of free movement, the right to eat, sleep and work when one pleases.

The UN convention on the right of the child was adopted by UN General Assembly on 20th Nov. 1989.

The key provisions are:

- Survival rights, from the child's rights to life through the most basic needs, including food, shelter and access to health care.
- Development rights or all those things that child requires in order to reach their fullest potential, from education and play the freedom of thought conscience made religion.
- Protection rights, requiring that children be safeguard against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Participation rights, including the right to free expression which allow children to take active role in their communities and nations.

Child labour prohibition and preventive measures such as compulsory primary education is out lined in Article - 28 and 32.

The ILO has 30 conventions and recommendation that relate to child labour.

Of these- Min Age (Industry)	Convention 1919
Min Age (trimmers and stockers)	Convention 1921
Min Age (Underground Work)	Convention 1965
White lead (Painting)	Convention 1921
Radiation Protection Curve	1960
Night Work of young person (Industry)	Convention 1919, revised in 1948

Some of the Constitutional Provisions and Acts are

1. Factories act - 1881
2. Mines act - 1901
3. Employment of Children Act - 1938
4. The Min Wages Act - 1948
5. The Plantation Labour act - 1951
6. Bidi and Cigarette workers Act - 1966
7. The Factories Act - 1948
8. The School and establishment Act
9. The Bonded Labour System (Abolition Act - 1976)

India has always stood for constitutional, statutory and development measures required eliminating child labour. The Indian constitution has consciously incorporated provision to secure compulsory universal, elementary education as well as labour protection for children. Labour Ministry set up the National Authority Ministry for the elimination of child labour. No child under 14 years shall be employed in several listed occupations processes. Punishment up to one month and fine 10,000 rupees.

The child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act - 1986 prohibits children's employment in jobs hazardous to their lives and health. The Act also ensures that they have adequate hours of rest and holidays".

Government of India adopted a National Child Labour Policy in 1987. The policy consists of three complementary measures:

- Legal action plan: It envisages strict enforcement of the provisions of the child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) act-1986 and other child related legislation.
- Focus on general development programmes benefiting children wherever possible, including the development of NFE (Non-Formal Education) for working children withdrawn from work and increasing the provision for employment and income generating schemes meant for their parents. A special cell Child labour Cell - was constituted to encourage voluntary organization to take up activities like NFE - vocational training provisions of health care, nutrition and education for working children.
- Area specific projects: to focus on areas known to have high concentration of child labour and to adopt a project approach for identification, withdrawal and rehabilitation of working children.

The supreme court of India in its judgment dated 10th December 1996 written petition civil no: 465/1986 has given certain directions.

- a. Simultaneous action in all districts of the country
- b. Survey for identification of working children (to be completed by June 10, 1997).
- c. Withdrawal of children working in hazardous Industries and ensuring their education.
- d. Contribution of 20,000 per child to be paid by the offending employers of children to welfare fund to be established for the purpose.
- e. Employment to one adult member of the family of the child, withdrawn from work, or contribution of Rs. 5000 to the welfare fund.
- f. Financial assistance to the families of children.....
- g. Regulating hours of work for children working in non-hazardous occupations, not exceeding six hours per day and education for at least two hours is ensued.
- h. Planning and preparedness on the part of Central and State Governments in terms of strengthening of the existing administrative/regulatory/enforcement framework.

On August 15, 1994 P V Narashima Rao announced his intention to bring 2 million child labour out of hazardous Industries by 2000.

According to The Central Advisory Board or Child Labour constituted on March 4, 1981.

- Review the implementation of the existing legislation administered by the Central Govrenment.
- Suggest legislative and welfare measures for the welfare of working children
- Review the progress of welfare measures for working children
- Recommend industries and areas for progressive elimination of child labour.

National Child Labour Projects have been set up in areas to rehabilitate child labour. 12 NCCPS were stated in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Major activity under the NCLP is the establishment of special schools to provide Non Formal education and vocational training and Supplementary nutrition to children withdrawn from employment.

South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, SACCS endeavour to abolish child labour. It adopts a two-pronged strategy: Direct measures, includes rescue and rehabilitation, indirect measures includes marches/rallies and Campaigns. Some projects of SACCS are:

Save the Childhood Year India 1995.

More than 200 NGOs joined hands in the campaign for total abolition of child labour and child servitude. They aimed at compulsory education for all children below 14 years of age.

Bachpan Bachao Andolan took place in January 19th to 25th 1995 in Delhi. More than 100,000 children in 500 villages of Ranga Reddy District of Andhra Pradesh benefited from MVF programme.

There are two main mechanisms for elimination of child labour:

1. Make education compulsory for all children below the age 15 Compulsory education is a certain remedy for child labour that all levels of government in India should employ. Compulsory education is a necessary condition for the reduction and abolition of child labour. Children if they are forced to attend school would be taken out of the labour force. Compulsory education is entailed to no side effects, the illiteracy rate would plummet, and the population growth would lose the stimulus it derived from children being prized as economic units to the family and adult employment would fall markedly. Kerala can be projected as a model for the rest of India. It spends 36-38% of its budget and providing universally accessible education system. It boast the highest school retention rate of about 100% of pupils, their grade 1 to 5 and literacy rate of 90% in 1991.
2. To establish a minimum wage for all labour.

Just by making school mandatory would cut off the child workers. So raising the cost of their labour would lower the demand for them. With children no longer easily available or cheap child labour would lose much of its attraction to employer. The market would automatically readjust to this situation with poorly paid children being replaced by better paid adults.

A child centered approach to Child labour is not merely to save the child from severe exploitation, but also to ensure that he/she has the chance to a future. All children have a right to a meaningful end. Factors, which may make children give up school, may be tackled in various ways: introduction of policies and practices that tackle discrimination or abuse in schools. Focus on improving teaching learning environment. Applying child centered active learning methodologies ensure that children are taught subjects and skills that will be relevant to their future working lives. Developing innovative, flexible time tables and curriculum alternative non formal education option need to be guided and regulated. Night schools and one off residential courses need to be used.

The concept of compulsory education, where all school-aged children are required to attend schools combats the force of poverty that pulls children out of school. Children are more likely to attend school if classes are small, learning imaginative and participatory.

Vocational training may also be necessary to provide incentives to attend school for working children.

Flexibility is a key to ensure the inclusion of such children. Flexibility relates to: a) Hours of schooling – such as afternoon school. b) Location of schooling – traveling long distance may be difficult for children. c) Grading system and syllabus. It is necessary that children receive education of sufficient quality. They should be educated through methods that are meaningful and interesting.

Conclusion

Children are the future of our society. Child labour keeps children out of school thereby preventing the development of their capabilities. The only way to prevent child labour is to recognize that the rightful place of a child is school and therefore every child should be ensured with compulsory primary education. Viewing all out – of – school children as potential child labour, we should treat the elimination of child labour and the universalities of elementary education as an inseparable processes. The success of one will automatically lead to the success of the other. Education can provide an opportunity to minimize the abuse that children suffer in the workplace.

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A Study of Non-detention Policy in Relation to Wastage and Attainment Level of Primary School Children in Rural West Bengal

Kutubuddin Halder* and Nimai Chand Maiti**

Progress towards "Education For All" has been much slower than expected at various declarations, conferences and summits at regional and international levels in different years since 1948. There are about 130 millions (about 21%) primary school-age children in developing countries of which about 60% are girls who do not attend school, out of a total of about 625 million children of these age groups in these countries (UNICEF, Facts Figures, 1998). The mean number of years of schooling that South Asian children receive is very low in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Bhutan, girls receive less than 1.2 years of schooling. Boys' averages are considerably higher, indicating that there is a gender gap in learning achievement as well. But Srilanka and Maldives have better records even in this area. The average achievement in terms of year of schooling is very low as a result of the short duration of schooling and the large proportion of persons who never enrolled in school. For the population above 25, the average years of schooling were 2.4 in India as compared to 5 in China, 7.2 in Srilanka, and 9.3 in South Korea (Parikh, 1999, P. 73).

It is a matter of serious concern in India that we have yet to achieve universalisation of primary education. Out of 200 million children in the age group of 6 to 14 years, 59 millions are not attending school. Of these, 35 millions are girls. There are problem relating to dropout rates, low level of learning achievement and low participation of girls, tribal and other disadvantaged groups (Report of the Government of India in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, 2000). Although the dropout rate in primary education (Class I-IV) in India has decreased since independence. From 1960-61 to 1997-98 the rate has fallen by 25.32%. Yet, the rate in 1997-98 is 39.58 while it is 41.34% for girls and 38.23% for boys. In different states the rates vary and in some states e.g. Meghalaya, Bihar, Rajasthan Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram the dropout rate (Class I-V) is above 50%. The rate is lowest in Kerala. It is also low in Daman and Diu, Pondicherry and Chandigarh (Ministry of Human Resource Development Department, Government of India, Annual Report 1998-99). Figure in West Bengal is also showing the same trend. In relation to total enrollment in class I the dropout figures are as follows: Dropout in class IV in 1973 is 83.53%, in 1978 is 77.08%, in 1986 it is 61.85%

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and that in 1993 is 49.92% (Ashok Mitra Commission (1992) and Sixth All India Educational Survey, 1997). Stagnation is another problem in the way of achieving universal primary education. In India the percentage of repeaters in Classes I, II, III and IV are 9.05, 7.09, 10.07 and 7.72 respectively. It is slightly higher for girls.

In 1950 after the independence Junior Basic Scheme was adopted in West Bengal. After a long spell of 31 years (1981), in the changed context of socio-political set up the curriculum was re-structured and one of the significant features of the new system was the adoption of non-detention policy (Paschim Banga Prathamik Shiksha Parshat, Mulyayan Nirdeshika, 1994, p. 5). In a report on the syllabus and curriculum of primary education in West Bengal, the Committee said, "No student up to class IV can be detained at the end of the academic year. Some students, however, may be detained for an extra academic year in Class V on the basis of an overall evaluation depending on the necessity of compensating any drawback in the students' efficiency" (Prathamik Shiksha Adhikar, Paschim Banga Sarkar, Prathamik Shikshar Shikshakram O Pathyasuchi, 1997, p. 9).

To reach the goal of universal primary education, the policy of comprehensive continuous evaluation, the adoption of non-detention policy is scientific and socially relevant practice (Paschim Banga Prathamik Shiksha Parshat, Mulyayan Nirdeshika, 1994, p. 5). According to Mitra Commission (1992) non-detention policy and continuous evaluation system is right step towards achieving the educational goal. To realize this, four stages were comprehended e.g. immediate evaluation based on unit planning, terminal evaluation, remedial teaching, and maintenance of cumulative record card and progress report. Teaching with respect to abilities of the learner, identification of weakness and deficiency of individual students, administering remedial teaching and on the basis of these, promotion to the next higher class are the key points of non-detention policy (Paschim Banga Prathamik Shiksha Parshat, Mulyayan Nirdeshika, 1994, pp. 5-14). Therefore, non-detention policy is not the abolition of examination, but it is identification of deficiencies, remedial teaching, and evaluation, both immediate and terminal are the hallmark of non-detention policy. It will reduce wastage.

Some critical observations on research findings in India

While reviewing the various studies conducted by investigators some contradictory findings were noticed. As for example, Malgavker (1995) has seen that dropout and detention are directly related. The SCERT, Hyderabad (1976) and Reddy (1989) have identical findings. These two studies have shown that non-detention policy has decreased dropout. Even Jyoti (1992) has observed that non-detention policy not only reduced dropout but has contributed to the qualitative improvement. But Sharma (1981) has observed that though non-detention policy has reduced dropout but this is at the cost of attainment. Again Yadav (1991) observed that with the introduction of non-detention policy, dropout has risen. The SCERT, Hyderabad (1986) study has shown that regular study habits of students were impaired as a result of non-detention policy.

Shukla (1998) has observed that the achievement level of students has gone down

due to the non-detention policy. The teachers have no suitable training for it (Buch, P and Dave, J. P. (ed.), 1998, *Contemporary Thoughts in Education*, pp. 204-245). Sixth All India Educational Survey (1997) also observed that 20% of primary schools are single teacher schools and 0.8% had no teacher at all. There are huge variations across states. Thirty percent of primary schools of Madhya Pradesh had only one teacher. In Haryana, 2.5% of primary school had no teacher. In West Bengal, 7.2% of schools had only one teacher and 0.2% had no teacher. The above data show the constraints behind the spirit of evaluation. The researchers conducted a case study of non-detention policy and dropout in primary education in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. It was found that :

1. Students stagnated in Classes II, III, and I were 57.47%, 10.59%, and 17.52% respectively after declaration of non-detention policy,
2. Student's dropout before arriving at Classes II, III and IV were 43.9%, 52.13% and 59.6% respectively after declaration of non-detention policy,
3. Time taken by the students to complete Class IV in average was above five years,
4. The dropout rate of girls was significantly higher than that of boys.

The review of contemporary research has revealed that many studies were conducted on wastage and attainment. But very few studies are available as to how the examination reforms in primary education, the introduction of continuous evaluation, the adoption of non-detention policy (NDP), have affected the question of wastage and attainment. No direct study on NDP in West Bengal is available. Since, 1981, when NDP was officially accepted, some studies like SCERT, 1991; Banerjee, M. 1993; Banerjee, S. N. 1993; West Bengal Education Commission, 1992 and Prabitra Sarkar Committee, 1999 dwelt upon primary education but there is only a cursory mention on NDP. Whether NDP is a failure, or it has any problem in its ground level practice, or has it any influence on attainment level of the student, there was no fruitful study. So, a total approach is what is necessary to take a clear insight into the problem of non-detention policy and its fallout on wastage and attainment. So, a total approach is what is necessary to take a clear insight into the problem of non-detention policy and its fallout on wastage and attainment. So, this study is especially relevant and significant in the context of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2000) presently running in various districts of West Bengal for achieving the universalisation of primary education.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the rate of stagnation at primary stage (class I to IV) before and after declaration of non-detention policy (NDP).
2. To find out the time taken by the students to complete primary education before and after declaration of NDP.
3. To find out the rate of dropout at primary stage of education (before arriving at classes, II, III and IV) before and after declaration of NDP.
4. To find out whether there is any difference between male and female students as regards the rate of dropout and stagnation at primary stage of education.
5. To find out the implementation of non-detention policy at primary school.

6. To find out the various constraints for the effective implementation of non-detention policy.
7. To find out the causes of dropout at primary stage.
8. To find out the attainment level at the end of class IV of primary stage of education.

Hypothesis

1. Non-detention policy will reduce the percentage of dropout at the primary stage of education.
2. There is a difference in proportion of dropout between boys and girls at primary stage of education.

Sample

Multi-phasic stratified random sampling technique was adopted. Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas and Midnapore districts of West Bengal were selected on the basis of literacy level (low, medium and advanced) for this study. Eighteen primary schools were selected from where the records of attendance are available during 1974 to 1981 and 1990-91 to 1997-98 from these districts. Sample of the study was all students i.e. 1369 ($539+830=1369$) who were admitted to class I in the academic year 1974 as the period before declaration of non-detention policy and 1990-91 as period after declaration of non-detention policy. 200 students of class IV in the session 1997-98 and another 72 dropout students in classes I, II, III and IV in the academic year 1997-98 were selected from the eighteen schools of the three districts. 51 teachers (available) out of 60 and 18 headmasters were taken from the eighteen schools.

Tools

The following tools were used in the study:

1. Student attendance registers (classes I to IV from 1974 to 1981 and 1990-91 to 1997-98).
2. Interview schedule on the opinion of teachers regarding non-detention policy at primary education.
3. Checklist regarding causes of dropout.
4. Attainment level test.

All the tools were prepared by the researchers and finalized on the basis of the result of pilot study and opinion of experts.

Limitation of the study

Samples were limited to eighteen schools in three districts of West Bengal it was an intensive enquiry including home visits and document analysis of four classes (I to IV) from eighteen schools during the period 1974 to 1981 and 1990-91 to 1997-98.

Pilot study

Pilot study was conducted in two schools.

Collection of Data

Information regarding dropout and stagnation was collected from students' attendance registers of primary schools. Headmasters and teachers were interviewed regarding non-detention policy. Parents were interviewed for the information was collected regard to know the causes of dropouts. The attainment level test was administered on 200 students of class IV of 18 schools.

Statistical Treatment

The data was analyzed by different statistical techniques. For quantitative analysis of data percentage, Mean, S.D., t-test, z-test, and ANOVA were applied and qualitative analysis done on the basis of observation during visits to schools and home and informal discussion with headmasters and teachers of the schools.

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Two phases were considered in this study.

1st Phase

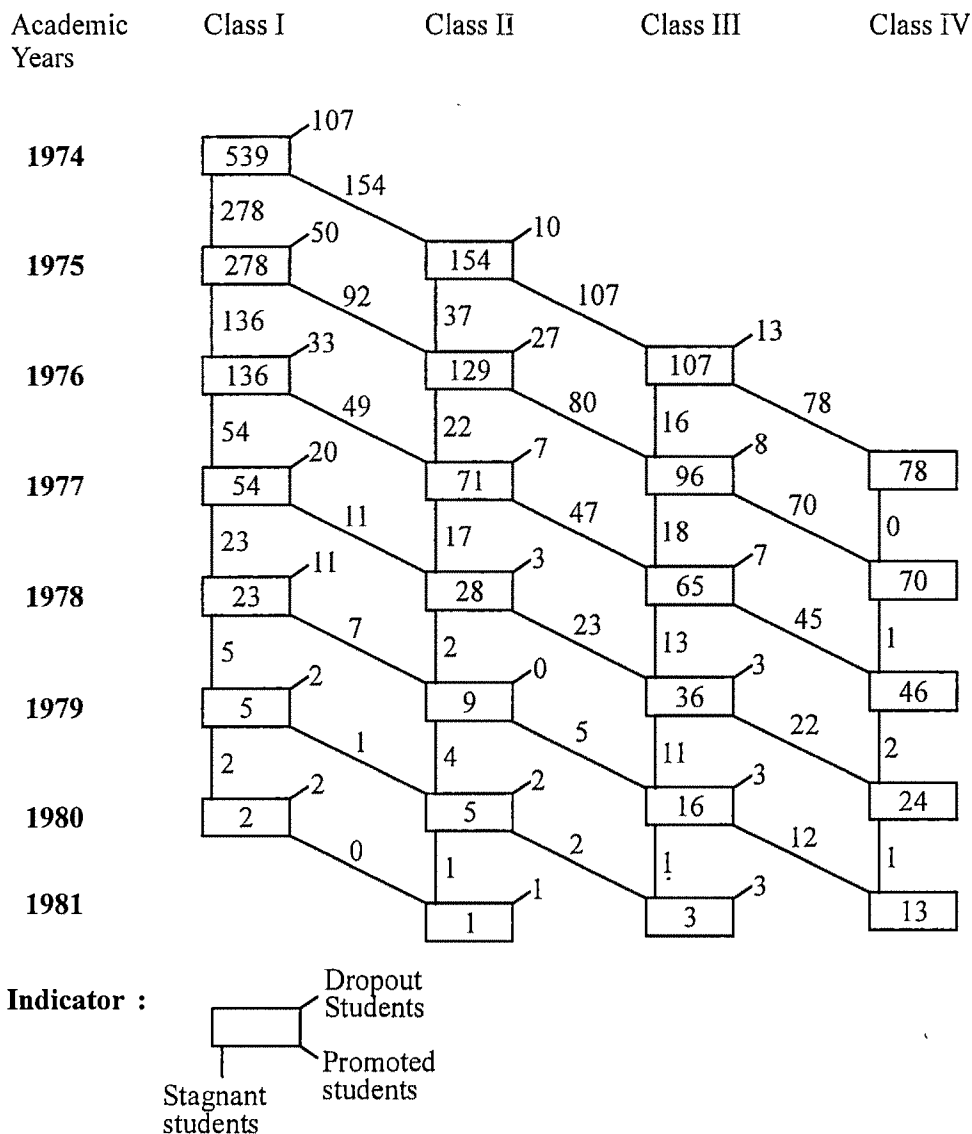
The academic sessions from 1974 to 1981 were treated as the 1st phase, i.e. the period before the declaration of non-detention policy. The students (539) who were admitted to class I in the academic session 1974 were regarded as students of the 1st phase.

2nd Phase

The academic sessions from 1990-91 to 1997-98 were treated as the 2nd phase, i.e. the period after the declaration of non-detention policy. The students (830) who were admitted to class I in the academic session 1990-91 were regarded as students of the 2nd phase.

Analysis was done on the basis of data collected in 1st phase and 2nd phase.

**Stagnation and dropout before declaration of non-detention policy at primary education—
Cohort 1**

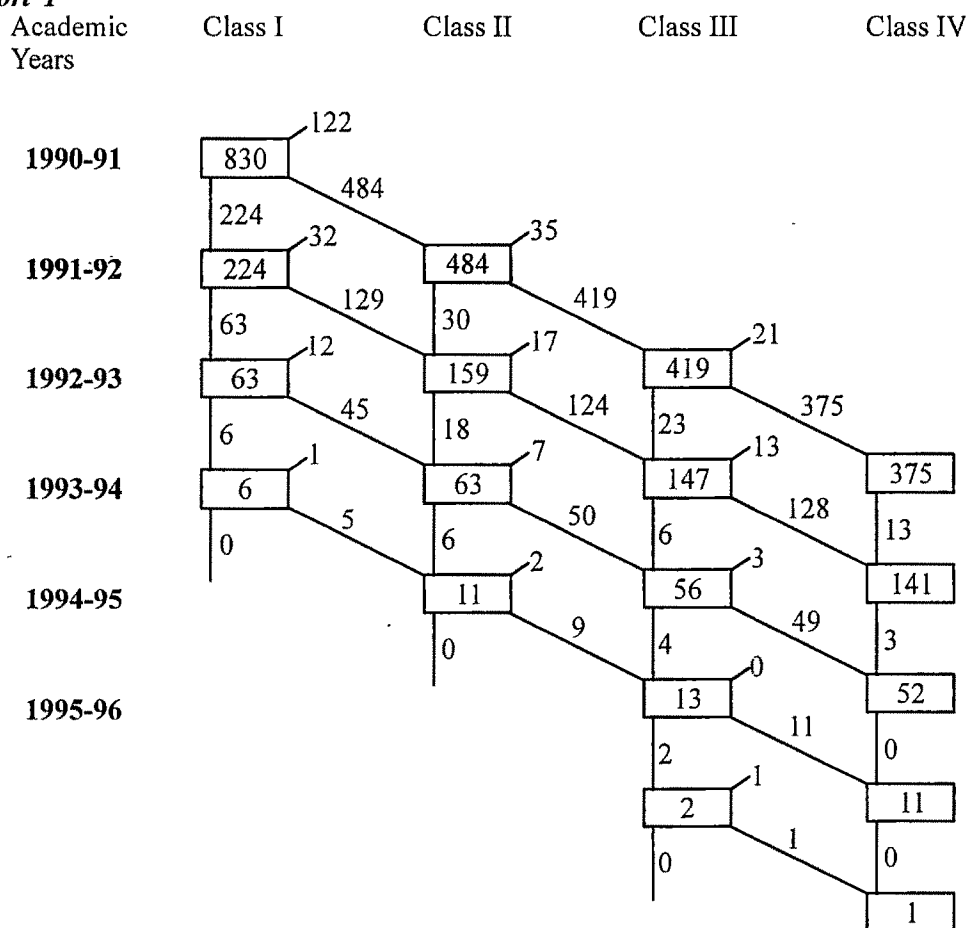


Ref. : State Council of Educational Research and Training, West Bengal, Mode, 1991.

Cohort 1 shows 539 students who were admitted to class I in 1974 and their position in subsequent years. Out of the 539 only 78 (14.47%) students completed class IV in 4 years in normal course of time, 69 (12.8%) students completed in 5 years, 44 (8.16%) students in 6 years, 23 (4.27%) students in 7 years and 13 (2.41%) took 8 years to complete class IV. Cohort 1 also shows that out of 539 students 278 (51.58%) i.e. more than 50% were detained in class I in 1975 and even after 6 years i.e. in 1980, 2 students are stagnant in class I.

It was also observed that in 1st phase out of 539 students in class I, 225 (41.74%) dropped out (107 in 1974, 50 in 1975, 33 in 1976, 20 in 1977, 11 in 1978, 2 in 1979 and 2 in 1980) before arriving class II, other 50 (9.28%) students (10 in 1975, 27 in 1976, 7 in 1977, 3 in 1978, 2 in 1980 and 1 in 1981) dropped out before arriving class III and another 37 (6.86%) students (13 in 1976, 8 in 1977, 7 in 1978, 3 in 1979, 3 in 1980 and other 3 in 1981) dropped out before arriving class IV. Thus in the 1st phase out of 539 students who were admitted in class I, 312 students in total (225+50+37) were dropped out before completing primary stage of education (class I-IV) in subsequent academic years (1974-1980). Therefore, the rate of dropout in primary stage of education was 57.88% (312 out of 539).

Stagnation and dropout after declaration of non-detention policy at primary education—Cohort 1



Cohort 2 shows the 830 students who were admitted to class I in 1974 and their position in subsequent years. It was observed that in the 2nd phase out of 830 students enrolled in class I in 1990-91, 224 (26.99%) were retained in the same class, 484 were promoted to class II and 122 (14.69%) dropped out before arriving class II in 1991-92. Again, out of 224 retained in 1991-92, 63 (28.13%) were retained, 129 promoted to class II, 32 dropped out before arriving class II in 1992-93. Again, out of 63 retained in class I in 1992-93, 6 were again retained, 45 promoted to class II and 12 dropped out before arriving class II in 1993-94. Again out of 6 retained in 1993-94 in class I, 5 were promoted to class II, the remaining 1 dropped out. Thus of 830 students enrolled, 167 (122+32+12+1) were dropped out before arriving class II in subsequent years mentioned above, i.e. the rate of drop out in class I (before arriving class II) was 20.12% and in total 663 (484+129+45+5) were promoted to class II. Again, out of these 663 students promoted in class II, 35 were dropped out before arriving in class II in 1991-92, 17 in 1992-93, 7 in 1993-94 and 2 dropped out in 1994-95. Thus of 663 promoted students 61 (35+17+7+2) dropped out before arriving class III i.e. the rate of drop out in class II was 9.20% and in total 602 students were promoted to class III (419 students in 1992-93), 124 in 1993-94, 50 in 1994-95 and 9 in 1995-96). Out of these 602 students, 38 students (21 in 1992-93, 13 in 1993-94, 3 in 1994-95, 1 in 1996-97) were dropped out before arriving class IV i.e. the rate of drop out in class III (before arriving class IV) was 6.31%.

Thus out of 830 enrolled students in class I in the academic session 1990-91, 167 dropped out before arriving class II, other 35 students before arriving class III and another 38 dropped out before arriving class IV i.e. the total drop out students in different classes (Class I-IV) in subsequent academic years (1990-91 to 1995-96) of primary education was 266 (167+61+38) students. Therefore, in the 2nd phase the rate of drop out at primary stage of education was 32.05%.

Table 1

Number of years taken by the students to complete class IV in two phases

Phases	No. of students admitted in class I	No. of students completing primary education	No. of years taken by the students to complete primary education (classes I-IV)				
			4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years
			Number (in (%))	Number (in (%))	Number (in (%))	Number (in (%))	Number (in (%))
1st phase	539	227	78 (34.36)	69 (30.40)	44 (19.38)	23 (10.13)	13 (5.73)
2nd phase	830	564	362 (64.18)	138 (24.47)	52 (9.22)	11 (1.95)	1 (0.18)

The table 1 indicates that the majority of the students (64.18%) completed upto class IV in four years in 2nd phase whereas only 34.36% students took four years to complete primary stage of education in 1st phase. In both phases, considerable percentage (one-fourth) of



students took five years to complete primary stage of education. To complete class IV, 5.73% students of 1st phase took even eight years whereas in the 2nd phase only 0.18% took eight years. The time taken by the students to complete upto class IV was significantly less in 2nd phase than 1st phase ($t_{\text{obs}} = 9.20 > t_{790, 0.05} = 1.97$).

Table 2

*Stagnation in primary stage of education (classes I to IV) in two phases
[before and after declaration of non-detention policy]*

Classes	Phases	Total students	Number of stagnant students	Percentage of stagnant students	z-values	Remarks
Class I	1st phase	539	278	51.58	9.22s	1st phase > 2nd phase
	2nd phase	830	224	26.99		
Class II	1st phase	314	76	24.20	7.26s	1st phase > 2nd phase
	2nd phase	663	50	7.54		
Class III	1st phase	264	54	20.45	6.22s	1st phase > 2nd phase
	2nd phase	602	38	6.31		
Class IV	1st phase	227	04	1.76	0.74ns	1st phase = 2nd phase
	2nd phase	564	15	2.65		

 $z_{05} = 1.64$

s - significant

ns - not significant > - greater than

The table 2 indicates that the rate of stagnation was significantly less in 2nd phase than 1st phase in all classes except in class IV of primary stage of education. It was also found that the rate of stagnation was highest in class I and lowest in class IV in both the phases.

Table 3

Dropout in primary stage of education (classes I to III) in two phases

Classes	Phases	Total students	Number of stagnant students	Percentage of stagnant students	z-values	Remarks
Class I	1st phase	539	225	41.74	8.65s	1st phase > 2nd phase
	2nd phase	830	167	20.12		
Class II	1st phase	314	50	15.92	3.09s	1st phase > 2nd phase
	2nd phase	663	61	9.20		
Class III	1st phase	264	37	14.02	3.71s	1st phase > 2nd phase
	2nd phase	602	38	6.31		

 $z_{05} = 1.64$

s - significant

The table 3 indicates that the rate of dropout in primary stages of education (classes I, II and III) was significantly less in 2nd phase than 1st phase.

Table 4
*Comparison of the percentage of dropout and stagnation
between boys and girls in two phases*

Phase	Classes	z-values for comparison of the rate of stagnation between boys and girls	Comparison of the rate of dropout between boys and girls	
			z-values	Remarks
1st phase	Class I	0.76ns	2.75s	girls > boys
	Class II	0.81ns	0.31ns	
	Class III	1.36ns	0.19ns	
	Class IV	1.43ns		
2nd phase	Class I	0.43ns	1.66s	girls > boys
	Class II	1.02ns	1.19ns	
	Class III	0.55ns	0.22ns	
	Class IV	1.60ns		

$z_{05} = 1.64$ x - significant ns - not significant > - greater than

It is observed from the table 4 that the z values for the comparison of percentage of stagnation between boys and girls in different classes of primary stage of education under both phases were not significant. In case of percentage of dropout between boys and girls at primary stage of education, the percentage of dropout of girls was greater than that of boys in class I in both the phases, although for classes II and III in both the phases the differences of the percentage of dropout were not significant. In this connection the hypothesis, No. 2 'there is a difference in proportion of dropout between boys and girls at primary stage of education' is partially accepted on the basis of the obtained result.

Causes of Dropout

Table 5

Various causes of dropout at different classes of primary stage of education

Causes	Dropout student in class I (%)		Dropout student in class II (%)		Dropout student in class III (%)		Dropout student in class IV (%)		Dropout student in four classes together (%)		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Total
Economic	54.55	28.57	54.55	14.29	60	25	50	25	54.76	23.33	41.67
Social	45.45	71.43	18.18	71.43	10	37.5	20	62.5	23.81	60.0	38.69
Educational	—	—	—	14.28	10	12.5	—	—	2.38	6.67	4.17
Health problem	—	—	9.09	—	10	—	10	—	7.14	—	4.17
Migration	—	—	—	—	—	25.0	—	—	—	6.67	2.77
Strict admission test for entering class IV	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	12.5	2.38	3.33	2.77
Others	—	—	18.13	—	10	—	10	—	9.53	—	5.56
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of students	11	7	11	7	7	8	10	5	42	30	72

It is observed from table 5 that there were various causes of dropout at different classes of primary stage of education. These were economic, social, educational, health problem, migration, strict admission test for entering class V and other causes. For economic cause, dropout was 41.67% and for social cause, it was 38.69%. The percentage of dropout in all the classes of primary stage of education was high among girls due to social cause and among boys it was due to economic cause.

Non-Detention Policy

To measure the extent of implementation of non-detention policy, four aspects of continuous evaluation system have been considered : Immediate evaluation, Remedial teaching, Terminal evaluation and maintenance of Cumulative Record Card and Progress Report. Regarding implementation of non-detention policy, three categories of schools were found. These are NF-schools i.e. not followed non-detention policy at all (33%), RF-schools i.e. rarely followed non-detention policy (28%), and PF-schools i.e. partially followed non-detention policy (39%).

Immediate evaluation

Immediate evaluation was not at all done in 33% schools. Immediate evaluation of very few units of the syllabus was done in 28% schools and only a few units in 39% schools. No schools did immediate evaluation of all units of all subjects continuously.

Terminal evaluation

It was observed that 39% schools did terminal evaluation of text-book-based subjects, physical education and games, productive and creative work and direct experience activities in three terms. Only text book based subject were evaluated in three terminal evaluation in 55% schools and one school in this study followed half-yearly and annual examination which was single teacher school. It was revealed through discussion with teachers that the ability of the students in sports and games could be judge only once in a year at the time of annual sports in the schools for selecting the toppers in order to enable them at the zonal or district level competition.

Remedial teaching

It was found from teachers' response that the teachers of 39% schools gave remedial teaching occasionally whereas teachers of 28% schools followed it sometimes. But it was found through discussion that majority of them identify weak students and coach them separately. Teachers repeat their lessons for helping slow learners wherever possible.

Maintenance of cummulative recored card (CRC) and progress report (PR)

For recording student's performance almost all schools (90%) used both Cumulative Record Card and Progress Report. Only one single teacher school did not use Cumulative Record Card or Progress Report. Qualitative and Quantitative measurement of performance in the text-book-based subjects were recorded on the basis of terminal evaluation. It was observed that 56% teachers wrote qualitatively in grades (A, B, C, D, E) students' performance in co-curricular activities without actually measuring their ability.

Table 6

*Various constraints for implementing non-detention
Policy in Primary schools came out from teachers opinion*

Constraints	Teacher Responsible (%)
Overcrowded classes	100
Lack of separate classroom	30
Poor condition of blackboard	40
Lack of in-service teachers training for continuous evaluation and remedial teaching	50
Pedagogic problem	20
Non-availability of adequate text books	24
Non-availability of study material in mother tongue through OB Scheme	60
Irregular attendance of students	41
Teachers are occupied with other activities like preparation of voters list, panchayet activities, etc.	9
Lack of facilities for activityd based subjects	20

It was found from discussion with teachers that a section of teachers did not have adequate knowledge about non-detention policy. Nearly 50% of teachers did not accept non-detention policy sincerely. Few schools (33%) received the form of cumulative record card and progress report at the end of academic session but these were essential for comprehensive evaluation throughout the year.

It was found that majority of the teachers (70%) did not have clear concept about remedial teaching and scientific evaluation. In all the three districts around mid nineties teachers of primary schools have undergone only two to five days training in implementation of non-detention policy. No further training in evaluation system and remedial teaching were undertaken by the authority. So teachers were not sufficiently conversant with the scientific method of gradation to be awarded to the students. Attainment level at the end of class IV students.

Table 7

Attainment of students at the end of class IV in different subjects

Obtained grade/marks (%)	Percentage of students in Bengali	Percentage of students in Mathematics	Percentage of students in Environmental Studies	Percentage of students in total
A (81-100)	13.5	24.5	14.5	15.0
B (66-80)	26.0	21.5	30.5	29.5
C (51-65)	24.0	14.5	25.5	24.0
D (36-50)	19.5	19.5	15.5	14.5
E (21-35)	12.0	9.0	8.0	13.5
F (0-20)	5.0	11.0	6.0	3.5

It is observed from table 7 that in attainment level test, only 15% students obtained A-grade i.e. above 80% marks, 53.5% students scored 50% to 80% marks and nearly one third (31.5%) students scored below 50% marks. It was observed that in attainment level test in Bengali, Mathematics and Environmental studies the mean score of 700 students was 87.5 out of the total marks 150 i.e. the mean score was 58% approximately. In each of the subjects mean attainment was more than 50 percent.

Non-Detention policy and Attainment Level

Table 8

Mean and S. D. of marks in attainment level test (150 marks) in three categories of schools

Number of students, Mean and S. D.	Schools NDP not followed	Schools NDP rarely followed	Schools NDP partially followed
Number of students	60	55	85
Mean	69.22	88.94	100.24
S.D.	28.68	29.03	25.42

The table 8 indicates that the performance of students of class IV was better in schools where non-detention policy was partially followed than the schools where non-detention policy rarely followed and not followed.

Table 9

*ANOVA for comparison of marks of class IV students
of three categories schools (NF-School, RF-School and PF-School)*

Source	Df	ss	MS	F
Between groups	2	33899.35	16949.68	21.77
Within groups	197	153382.87	778.59	
Total	199	187282.22		

$$F_{2,197,0.05} = 3.00$$

Comparison of performances of students of class IV of three categories of schools was presented in table 9 in term of ANOVA. Calculated F-value (21.77) was greater than the table value (3.00) at 0.05 level i.e. F-value was significant. So, we can say that there was significant difference in performance of students of class IV among three categories of schools. Again, by applying t-test it was found that the performance of students of class IV of non-detention policy rarely followed schools was better than that of non-detention policy not followed school ($t_{\text{obs}} = 20.28 > t_{0.05, 113} = 1.65$) and the performance of students of class IV of non-detention policy partially followed schools was better than that of non-detention policy rarely followed school ($t_{\text{obs}} = 13.52 > t_{0.05, 138} = 1.65$). So we can say that the performance of the students was better in school where non-detention policy partially followed than the students performance in schools where it is not at all followed.

Non-Detention Policy (NDP) and Dropout

From the findings of the study it was found that though non-detention policy at primary education level was officially declared in West Bengal during 1981, out of 18 schools undertaken for the study, none had implemented it completely. It was further noticed that this non-detention policy was partially implemented at only 7 schools and it was rarely followed at 5 schools. 6 schools did not implement it at all. The rate of dropout in primary education in the 2nd phase at these 3 categories of schools is presented in table 10.

Table 10

*Dropout in the three categories of schools
at primary stage of education (class I-IV)*

Categories of schools	No. of students admitted in class I	No. of dropout students	Percentage of dropout
Non-detention policy not followed schools	235	90	38.29
Non-detention policy rarely followed schools	207	67	32.37
Non-detention policy partially followed school	388	109	28.09

It is observed from table 10 that the rate of dropout in primary education was 28.09% in non-detention policy partially followed schools and it was slightly lower than non-detention policy rarely followed schools (32.37%). But the difference was not significant ($z_{\text{obs}} = 1.08 < z_{0.05} = 1.65$). Further the rate of dropout at primary level in the non-detention policy not followed schools was slightly higher (38.29%) compared to the non-detention policy rarely followed schools (32.37%), though this was not significantly higher ($z_{\text{obs}} = 1.30 < z_{0.05} = 1.65$). From calculation in the table 10 it may be noted that comparison between the non-detention policy partially followed schools and non-detention policy not followed school shows the rate of dropout at primary stage of education in non-detention policy not followed schools was high (38.29%) and there was significant difference in the rate of dropout between two types of schools ($z_{\text{obs}} = 2.66 > z_{0.05} = 1.65$). On the basis of above result mentioned in the table 10 it can be stated that non-detention policy can definitely bring down dropout rate if various components of non-detention policy are effectively implemented. In this study parents of dropout, stagement and promoted students were interviewed to get information about their socio-economic background, teachers were interviewed and researcher personally visited the schools and studied various physical facilities available in relation with the implemented of non-detention policy. Children were also interviewed. So on the basis of discussion and observation it may be concluded that if non-detention was followed fully at primary stage of education the rate of dropout would have been reduced noticeably. Therefore, Hypothesis No. 1 is supported in this study. There, it may be interpreted that effective implementation of non-detention policy can reduce dropout rate.

Conclusions

1. The rate of stagnation at the primary stage of education significantly decreased after the declaration of non-detention policy. Whereas the rates of stagnation in classes I, II and III in 1st phase were 51.58%, 24.20% and 20.45% respectively and during the 2nd phase, the rate of stagnation came down to 26.99%, 7.54% and 6.31%. In both phases the rates of stagnation in class IV were very negligible. In both phases the rate of stagnation was high in class I (table 2) and in this regard the rate of stagnation was

higher in Murshidabad (58.06% for 1st phase and 46.44% for 2nd phase) than in South 24-Parganas (56.75% for 1st phase and 22.02% for 2nd phase) and in comparison with Midnapore (32.50% for 1st phase, 13.64% for 2nd phase) the rate was higher in South 24-Parganas.

2. After the declaration of non-detention policy students took lesser time to complete class IV students than before declaration of non-detention policy (table 1).
3. The rate of dropouts was significantly lower after the declaration of non-detention policy. Whereas the rates of dropouts in classes I, II and III were 41.47%, 15.92% and 14.02% respectively in the 1st phase and in 2nd phase rates of dropout decreased to 20.12%, 9.20% and 6.31% respectively. The dropout rate was the highest in class I (table 3) and in the 2nd phase it was lower in South 24-Parganas (19.49%) than in Murshidabad (26.97%), in comparison with South 24-Parganas it was lower in Midnapore (14.34%).
4. There was no difference in the rate of stagnation between boys and girls in the primary stage of education. Only in class I the rate of dropout was higher among girls than among boys (table 4).
5. The main causes of dropout were economic and social problems, other causes were educational problem, health problems of students, migration and other problems (table 5).
6. In an attainment level test, class IV students secured mean 58% marks. 'A' grade was awarded to only 15% students. 50%-80% marks was secured by 53.5% students (table 7).
7. The performance of students in attainment level test in schools which partially followed non-detention policy was better than that of the students in schools which did not follow non-detention policy (tables 8 and 9).
8. Comprehensive evaluation systems and remedial training are the integral part of non-detention policy. It may be concluded that no primary schools in this study completely followed comprehensive evaluation system for which teachers are not being trained properly. Only 39% schools followed non-detention policy partially and 28% schools followed rarely.
9. Only text book based subjects like Bengali, Mathematics and Environmental studies got importance in the curriculum. Physical Education and Productive and Creative work, Direct Experience Activities were not given any importance and performance of these activities were not written in Cumulative Record Card and Progress Report with grade A, B, C, D and E actually measuring their ability. Majority of teachers relied on mere guess work.
10. The constraints in the implementation of non-detention policy according to teachers' opinion were: (i) lack of proper training on scientific evaluation system and remedial teaching, (ii) overcrowded classes, (iii) Lack of appropriate teaching aids, (iv) Lack of continuous evaluation and monitoring of in-service primary teachers training and (v) irregular attendance of students.

11. It may be concluded that of all the components of non-detention policy like immediate evaluation, terminal evaluation, remedial teaching, cumulative record card and progress report had been implemented successfully in primary schools it could have been reduced dropout rate and attainment level of students could have been improved.

Recommendation

On the basis of the result of the present study it may be said that to reduce wastage due to stagnation and problem of dropouts fully implementation of non-detention policy is essential. Through effective implementation of comprehensive continuous evaluation throughout the year in primary school non-detention policy will be successful and performance of students will be improved. Only official declaration of the policy does not ensure the success of non-detention policy. It may be recommended that teachers in the primary stage are to be well acquainted with the nature and scope of implementation of Non-detention policy. Continuous in-service teachers training at primary stage is required for orientation of teachers to understand comprehensive continuous evaluation system, diagnosis of students for the causes of under achievement or failure and remedial teaching. Special care has to be taken to teach weak students. District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) should conduct intensive training course for implementing various components of NDP, after that the teachers should put it into practice, report the inconvenience from the feedback received therein, corrective measures will be taken. This practice should continue for years together till the desired goal is achieved. Supervising team including experts from primary teachers training institute, DIET, and circle inspector should visit schools frequently and this work should be monitored by District Primary Education Council. A significant step will be establishing local level support mechanism such as Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) and Block Resource Centres (BRC) or creation of community bodies such as village education committee and programmes of capacity building among CRC and BRC personnel should be developed for qualitative improvement of primary schools. On the basis of the opinion of the teachers and result of the study, it may be also recommended that teacher-pupil ratio is to be brought down. One teacher per class is the best condition, if it is not feasible, multigrade teaching can be introduced through more action research programme.

It may be recommended arrangement should be made for supply of text books, printed proforma of cumulative record card and progress report and other learning materials in the beginning of the session. There should be frequent parent teachers meeting to discuss children's problem, panchayat in rural areas should have more close contact with primary schools. School and community should work together in rural areas for encouraging guardians, students for development of primary education.

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Some Psychological Correlates of Class Twelve Science Scores

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Admission to the science stream at the higher secondary level is a landmark in a student's academic life. It may serve as a gateway to a successful career in science. But for some students who are deficient in the characteristics necessary for tackling the challenges posed by the post-secondary science course, the experiences are fraught with underachievement and despair. Besides, a developing country such as ours cannot afford to suffer from wastage of human resources and funds on account of induction of a large number of unsuitable students into the higher secondary science stream.

The educational institutions follow a faulty practice of only considering a student's marks obtained in the secondary examination before offering him/her admission to the plus-two science stream. But it seems imperative to assess the extent to which a prospective student possesses the psychological characteristics which facilitate achievement in higher secondary science subjects. A survey of researches reveals that there are a multitude of psychological variables of students related to their achievements in science at the post-secondary level. But it will only be possible to examine the roles of a few of the more important ones (as indicated in previous researches) within the confines of the present study.

Several authors (e.g. Chatterjee et al., 1978; Sharma and Mehta, 1988; Benbow and Arjmand, 1990; Adigwe, 1993) have affirmed that scientific knowledge and aptitude are closely related to achievement in science. Investigators (e.g. Jamuar, 1974; Dhaliwal, 1977; Wolfenden and Pumfrey, 1985; Loranger, 1994) have highlighted the important role played by study habits in science achievement. Besides, cognitive style (viz. field-dependence - independence) was found to be intimately related to achievement in science in researches carried out by Chatterjea and Paul (1981), Dani (1984), Leo Rhynie (1985), Nah et al. (1990) etc.

So in the light of the abovementioned research findings, an attempt will be made in the present investigation to verify whether scientific knowledge and aptitude, study habits as well as cognitive style of students are indeed closely related to their science scores at the higher secondary stage.

Methodology

Design

The design of the present study is correlational in nature.

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Hypothesis

It is expected that scientific knowledge and aptitude; study habits as well as cognitive style of students are significantly correlated with their physics and chemistry scores at the higher secondary level.

Sample

The area sample consists of 159 female students of Class XII (science stream) studying in seven Central Schools of Kolkata region. The sample is more or less homogeneous with respect to socio-economic status were eliminated. Only class XII girl students were included in the sample to ensure further homogeneity.

Tools Used

1. Scientific Knowledge and Aptitude Test by Chatterjee and Mukherjee to measure scientific knowledge and aptitude (SKA).
2. Palsane and Sharma Study Habits Inventory to assess study habits (SH).
3. Group Embedded Figures Test or GEFT by Witkin et al. to assess cognitive style i.e., field dependence - independence (FDI).
4. Kuppaswamy's Socio-Economic Status (SES) Scale to assess SES for controlling it.
5. NIIP Non-Verbal Test 70 to measure intelligence for controlling it.

Besides, the physics (Phy) and chemistry (Chem) scores obtained by the students in Class XII half yearly examination were noted from the school records. For both subjects, the marks obtained in theoretical and practical tests were added up. Physics and chemistry were selected for being compulsory science subjects. Class XII half yearly examination scores were chosen because students usually strengthen their learning for the last major examination preceding the board examination.

Statistical Analysis

Initially, means and standard deviations were computed for each of the relevant variables. Then product-moment correlation coefficients were obtained between pairs of the relevant variables. Each coefficient was subjected to test of significance at .01 level of confidence.

Results and Discussion

The present investigation attempts to study whether the psychological characteristics of students like scientific knowledge and aptitude, study habits and cognitive style (field - dependence - independence) have any relation to their examination - performance in science subjects at the higher secondary stage. The obtained results of the study will be presented in the following tables 1 and 2. In both the tables, the short names of all the variables, as mentioned earlier in the subsection entitled "Tools Used", will be stated for the sake of brevity.

First of all it is essential to know the means and standard deviations of the scores obtained by the sample of students (N=159) with regard to all the relevant variables of the investigation i.e. the student - characteristics as well as the physics and chemistry scores of Class XII

half yearly examination. Therefore, these mean and standard deviation values are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1

Means And Standard Deviations Of The Sample (N=159) In Respect Of The Relevant Variables.

	Mean	S.D.
SKA	44.87	11.36
SH	52.69	13.14
FDI	9.88	3.06
Phy	51.63	17.68
Chem	53.31	17.38

After examining the mean and standard deviation values presented in Table 1, it will be interesting to be acquainted with the nature of relationship, if any, between each of the relevant student - characteristics and the physics and chemistry scores. Hence, product-moment correlation coefficients between pairs of the variables were calculated, tested for significance and presented in Table 2 which follows.

Table 2

Correlation Coefficients With Respect To The Relevant Variables (N=159)

	SKA	SH	FDI	Phy	Chem
SKA		0.72**	0.52**	0.58**	0.50**
SH			0.49**	0.62**	0.52**
FDI				0.50**	0.39**

** $p < .01$

Scrutiny of Table 2 reveals that all the relevant student-characteristics of the investigation viz., scientific knowledge and aptitude, study habits as well as cognitive style are significantly and positively related to the Class XII half yearly examination physics and chemistry scores of students. Thus the hypothesis of the investigation, as stated earlier, has been fully accepted. The finding of the present study in respect of scientific knowledge and aptitude corroborates the findings of Chatterjee et al. (1978), Sharma and Mehta (1988), Benbow and Arjmand (1990) and Adigwe (1993), as mentioned earlier. The outcome of the present research in respect of study habits was also in congruence with the results of investigators like Jamuar (1974), Dhaliwal (1977), Wolfenden and Pumfrey (1985) and Loranger (1994), as already stated. Similarly, the result of this investigation with regard to cognitive style verifies the findings reported by Chatterjea and Paul (1981), Dani (1984), Leo - Rhynie (1985) and Nah

et al. (1990), as stated previously. So it seems that generally pupils with higher scientific knowledge and aptitude, superior study habits and field independent cognitive styles attain higher scores in physics and chemistry at the plus-two stage.

Besides, scientific knowledge and aptitude were found to be positively and significantly related to both study habits and cognitive style highlighting the fact that the interrelationships were very strong and direct. Similarly, study habits were found to be significantly and positively related to cognitive style. These results reveal direct, linear relationships among these student variables. Since the pattern of relationships between each of the science subjects and the psychological characteristics of the students are similar, so it seems that possibly similar sets of student characteristics underlie performance in physics and chemistry examinations at the plus-two stage.

Conclusion

On the basis of the results obtained, it seems that scientific knowledge and aptitude, study habits as well as cognitive style are important correlates of students' physics and chemistry scores of class twelve half yearly examination.

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Adolescence Education and Their Social Ecology – A Pilot Study

Subir Nag*

Concept of Adolescence Education

Bibby (1957), Ellis (1944), Chesser and Dawe (1944) felt the need for provision of sex education much earlier, and after a passage of few decades it is going to take a new shape in a broader and comprehensive concept of Adolescence Education keeping an eye towards the new millennium.

The term adolescence education was used for the first time by UNESCO (PROAP, Bangkok) and then further specified in an International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD - Cairo, Egypt) as the title of the package on sex education, sexuality education, family life education, reproductive health education and puberty education to be imparted among the adolescents. They confront a number of problems because of their ignorance regarding their process of growing up, which is particularly related to their reproductive health. Adolescence Education was believed to have some positive link with the existing school curricula fulfilling the specific needs of adolescents of various socio-cultural settings of our country. The National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, adopted the term and the programmes in a prescriptive form, considering its relevance to Indian Society. In the concerned document, the NCERT (1993) defined adolescence education as an educational endeavour to provide learners with accurate and adequate knowledge about adolescents' reproductive health with a focus on the process of growing up during adolescence, in its biological, psychological, socio-cultural and moral dimensions.

Need for and objectives of adolescence education

In the backdrop of growing pace of sex crimes in our country, sex misbehaviours with young girls, child abuse and premarital pregnancies of adolescent girls, NCERT has formulated few specific objectives of adolescent education so that young children may inculcate proper attitude towards sex. They should be equipped with the required awareness regarding their own sexuality and reproductive health along with three major issues - i) the process of growing up, ii) HIV/AIDS and iii) drug abuse. Adolescence Education should be considered a must, not only as an antidote to AIDS, STDs and unwanted pregnancies but as an essential step to develop among adolescents a sense of responsibility for their partner. Ignorance should never be equated with innocence as it is presently done in our over - conservative society. (Dutta, 1997; Joy, 1996; Khayat, 1997).

In this regard, a need to explore the social ecology (Nag, 1997) of adolescents'

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knowledge and belief about sex was felt to study the role of various agencies in imparting awareness related to sexuality and reproductive process.

Psycho-physiology of sexuality

Gonadotropin secretion from the pituitary gland activates the onset of puberty which is related to the growth and maturation of the reproductive system, when the first sex cell or gamete appears along with few outer physical manifestations in both the genders at the age of 8 to 10 years. (Ganong, 1985).

Development of sex organs along with secondary sexual characteristics among adolescents are related to many factors like biochemical (Das, 1984), hormonal, genetic and metabolic (Chatterjee, 1979). Hormonal Coordination of these factors affects also the psyche of adolescents (Freeman, 1949). physiological as well as psychological factors together control the sexuality and sex drive in adolescents (Guyton, 1976).

Freud believed that auto erotic nature of sexual instinct finds the sexual object at the time of puberty. Physiological transformation provides them with few new experiences related to sexual excitation. Adolescents start to become shy at this time and try to shield their own curiosities from the elders (Brill, 1938) and start to form their own peer group. This has also been reflected in our present study while exploring the social ecology of adolescents related to their awareness and exposure of sexuality.

Social Ecology of Adolescents - A pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to explore the nature of the broad social ecology of adolescents constituted by their family members and neighbours; playmates and classmates; teachers and private tutors along with various other components of media like T.V., magazines, films, books, newspapers etc. Four distinct agencies were identified for the present study - a) MEDIA - which includes films, T.V., newspaper, magazines and different types of advertisements, b) PEER GROUP - which includes playmates of the locality and classmates of school, c) PARENTS - both fathers and mothers and d) TEACHERS - both school teachers and private tutors.

Three specific dimensions were explored -

- a) Onset of adolescents' early sexual curiosities and involvement of various agencies to meet those curiosities informally.
- b) Opinion of Adolescents, their Parents and Teachers regarding adolescents' extent of awareness and exposure related to sexuality.
- c) Exact role played by various agencies to act as sources of different sex related terms in adolescents' social ecology.

Objective of the study: The study tried to identify the exact role of different agencies present in the social ecology of adolescents and nature of their participation to impart sex education in an informal manner.

Tools used: An Inventory on Sex Education was designed by the author as per ICMR (1998) specifications where the question items were arranged according to three specific dimensions mentioned above.

Sample: 102 adolescent students of age group 11 to 15 (54 girls and 48 boys) along with their parents (both fathers and mothers, i.e. N=204) and few teachers of the respective schools (N=56) have constituted the sample.

Results and Interpretation

Results of the present study are presented in the following tables (Table 1, 2 and 3) which are self explanatory in nature.

Table 1 depicts adolescents' opinion regarding the exact role of various agencies at the time of beginning of their sexual curiosities. Boys and Girls both have reported the role of media which includes films, newspapers, T.V., magazines etc. in shaping their sexual curiosities as it started to influence them when they are in Class V (age group 10+ only). Peer group comes into the field next when the influence of parents and teachers comes much later. Only deviation is observed in case of girls and their parental influence. The possible reason may be related to their onset of menstruation during that time.

Table 2 shows the extent of awareness of adolescent boys and girls regarding few selected terms related to reproduction and sexuality on the hand and on the other hand this table also shows the opinion of adolescents' parents (Father and Mother both) and adolescents' teachers regarding the awareness level of their

Table 1

Comparative role of various sources to meet adolescent's early sexual curiosities.

Participants	Onset of information coming form various sources			
	Media	Peer Group	Parents	Teacher
Boys	V (10+)	VI (11+)	IX (14+)	VIII (13+)
Girls	V (10+)	V (10+)	V (10+)	VIII (13+)

Table 2

Comparative data of Adolescents', Parents' and Teachers' opinion regarding the extent of Sexual awareness of adolescents. Proportions indicated within parenthesis.

Terms Related To Sexuality	Adolescents Boys	Adolescent Girls	Parents of Adolescents	Teachers of Adolescents
1. Periods	37 (.77)	54 (1)	106 (.51)	36 (.64)
2. Wet dreams	36 (.75)	17 (.31)	47 (.23)	11 (.19)
3. Masturbation	41 (.85)	19 (.35)	62 (.30)	18 (.32)
4. Pregnancy	45 (.93)	52 (.96)	163 (.79)	36 (.64)
5. Erection	48 (1)	32 (.59)	48 (.23)	19 (.33)

Table 2 : Cont.

Terms Related To Sexuality	Adolescents Boys	Adolescent Girls Adolescents	Parents of Adolescents	Teachers of
6. Intercourse	34 (.70)	30 (.55)	24 (.11)	12 (.21)
7. Venereal disease	22 (.45)	16 (.29)	08 (.03)	09 (.16)
8. Abortion	10 (.20)	15 (.27)	11 (.05)	06 (.10)
9. Impotency	06 (.12)	03 (.05)	02 (.009)	02 (.03)
10. Rape	14 (.29)	19 (.35)	11 (.05)	04 (.07)
11. Oral Sex	03 (.06)	02 (.03)	01 (.004)	02 (.03)
12. Safe Sex	01 (.02)	01 (.01)	01 (.004)	01 (.01)
	(N = 48)	(N = 54)	(N = 204)	(N = 56)

wards and students respectively. It is quite clear from the proportions shown in Table 2 that in majority of the cases neither parents nor teachers could put correct assumption about the adolescents of their home and school respectively. They consider them to be too innocent which in reality they are not. This gap between the perceptions of adolescents with their parents and teachers ultimately lead to creation of a new "hush hush channel" of their own peer group to discuss any matter related to sexuality.

Table 3 shows the exact nature of adolescents social ecology related to sexuality. They themselves have identified various agencies around them wherefrom they have got information regarding different sexual terminologies. The table shows that media and peer group influences are much more deep rooted and widespread comparing to other two counterparts, i.e. Parents and Teachers. Less involvement of Parents and Teachers may be due to presence of a conservative parental belief system in our society and lack of provision of sex education in our existing school curriculum.

Implementation of Adolescence Education

Absence of any official channel to impart education regarding reproductive health on one side and over conservative attitude of parents and teachers on the other, have forced the adolescent boys and girls to create an alternative "hush hush" channel among their own peer group which has been proved further by the present pilot study. This "hush hush" channels not only share facts only, but also exchange misinformation and unrealistic fantasies related to sexuality which are enough to spoil their future normal adult life.

In order to check this situation, educationists willing to impart adolescence education in its latest form, should try to utilise this peer group interaction channel. Teachers or Counsellors from

Table 3

Comparative data of various agencies as source of different sex related terms as identified by adolescents of age group 11 to 15 (N=102; Boys = 48; Girls = 54)
[One word may come from more than one source]

Terms Related To Sexuality	Media		Peer Group		Parents		Teachers	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1. Periods	21	33	37	54	04	54	02	14
2. Wet dreams	10	00	42	09	03	02	01	00
3. Masturbation	02	00	40	31	01	00	00	00
4. Pregnancy	29	41	46	52	11	28	08	12
5. Erection	04	01	47	43	01	01	00	00
6. Intercourse	36	24	48	51	00	01	01	00
7. Venereal disease	18	06	32	23	02	02	01	00
8. Abortion	26	13	30	48	04	05	02	02
9. Impotency	12	11	14	20	00	00	00	00
10. Rape	34	29	31	42	00	04	00	01
11. Oral Sex	03	07	24	21	00	00	00	00
12. Safe Sex	10	12	16	18	00	00	01	00

outside may arrange a “dumb box” session to collect slips containing questions from the participants regarding their sexual curiosities and then can select few adolescent participants as convenors who after receiving the correct facts or answers to those questions will go back to their own peer group to interact with other students under the supervision of the teachers or counsellors.

Conclusion

The present study tried to focus a spotlight on the social ecology of adolescents to explore the nature of communication between them and other agencies of their own ecology. Peer group interaction channel in this regard may be accepted as the latest transformation of “Sardar Podo” system of Gurukul or Bell’s monitorial system to fulfil the basic objectives of Adolescence education without disturbing the existing rigid and conservative belief system of parents and other elders including teachers in our community.

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A Study of the Nature of Academic Achievement of the Physically Challenged Women

Santoshi Haldar*

Abstract :

Academic achievement is one of the most important objectives of education. Low achievement is educational wastage of a nation, which amounts to a big loss to nation's monetary resources as well as human resources. The raw materials of Indian democracy of tomorrow are the millions of children & youth of today. The wealth power & spiritual forces of this nation lie in the infinitely varied potentialities of the boys & girls. Every individual is precious. So not even the specially challenged can be wasted. The present study aimed at exploring the possible correlates of academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women especially in relation to parent's income & education. The sample consist of 25 (N=25) orthopaedically challenged women gathered by situational sampling technique from different school. The tools used where; Socio-economic background (income, occupation, education)–schedule, Ravens progressive matrices Test, Academic achievement School & college record. Median test, Chi square, Rank difference correlation were used as statistical measure. Findings indicate significant relationship between academic achievement & intelligence of the orthopaedically challenged women which is a quite established fact. The findings also indicate mother's education to be a significant correlate for the academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women.

Academic achievement is one of the most important objectives of education. Still now academic achievement remains perhaps the most significant determinant or indicator of one's achievement on which depends his later development be it career, vocation, self-esteem & finally his life.

The most important need & desire of a student is to achieve his best, which will make his life worth living & add respect & value to his life & personality. Low achievement is educational wastage of a nation, which amounts to a big loss to nation's monetary & human resources.

Indian Education Commission (1964) Expressed :

“The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classroom....on the quality & number of person coming out of schools & college will depend our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction, the principal objective which is to raise the standard of living of our people.”

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The educational institution constitutes by far the greatest source of manpower. But for being benefited from these manpower, the human resources present in the grown up boys & girls must be completely utilized. Under achievement is related to many factors & causes must be understood by teachers & parents if school & home are to deal with the problems posed by the underachieving pupils. The task is envisaged as maximizing achievement of all children with due recognition of individual difference in ability, it is apparent that not all children are capable of reaching the same educational standard, but all children are capable of development.

Educationist are of the view that academic achievement of pupils is influenced by a number of non-intellectual factors. Therefore, the need is to pay more attention to find out those factors. They also think that it is possible to develop the academic achievement by inculcating or enrichment of these non-intellectual factors in the pupil who do not possess sufficient weightage.

According to *Dictionary of education* (Good. V. Carter & Merkel Winifred R. 1959), "Academic achievement is the knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects, usually designed by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers or by both." *The National Sample survey Organization (NSSO 1991)* estimated that 100 million Indian suffer with one or more disabilities. This projected nearly 10% of Indians with some disabling conditions. The 2001 Census figures show that the highest (48.5%) of disabled is in the visual impairment category following by the "motor disabled" (27.9%). The lowest (5.8%) has been reported for hearing disability. Indian constitution envisages equal rights for all. It's not only a matter of rights for this special class but also a matter of concern when it comes to utilization of maximum man power to enhance the progress of the country. The present study is significant enough to throw some light on the above issue.

Intelligence, academic achievement & the challenged

There are apparently few recent investigations of the intelligence of physically challenged as a group. It would reasonably be expected that orthopaedically challenged as a group would score less well on measures of intelligence than normal children.

Such factors as loss of time from school, limited opportunity for environmental exploration, lowered level of aspiration may all operate to the detriment of adequate scoring on tests of intelligence. Such investigation on the intelligence of crippled children as have been reported has tended to confirm the hypothesis of lower intellectual functioning.

If estimates of intellectual capacity are made in the basis of school achievement there are problems of equal magnitude to overcome. *Rosenhaltz & Simpson (1984)* maintained that in our society intelligence is defined as an inevitable stable, general & diffuse quality of individuals that is reliably measured. Being classified as handicapped has an impact on the future school & life career of individuals. The influence that the handicap has on a student heavily upon that students own behaviour & achievement as well as on the educational setting in which the student is placed. Most studies find that handicapped & low achieving students are poorly accepted in regular classes. Creative strategies for improving the chances of successful learning & adjustment for low achieving & handicapped students in regular classrooms have finally begun to appear in the literature.

Socioeconomic status (SES)

The most important environmental influence on a child is that of his home, that is his socio-economic condition. There appears to be almost universal recognition among academics, professionals, & the public at large that students from various social class, ethnic & racial backgrounds differ markedly in the extent to which their performance in school meets the standards from the varying backgrounds differ in the extent to which they are likely to be classified as handicapped & in need of special need services. If we analyze the causes of backwardness in education, multiplicity of causes as socioeconomic condition of the pupil, failure of the guardians in financial & other help, ill health shortage of accommodation etc would be found. So economic condition, parent's attitude towards education & the environment all these factors have significant effect on the education of their ward & continue to be a powerful predictor of academic success for children (*Edelman, 1987; Collins & Hauskin 1995*). Thus low socio-economic status (SES), which is one of the most consistently found correlates of poor academic achievement & mild mental retardation, is a composite index of a no. of variables (parental, education, occupation, income), which themselves may only indirectly influence a child. *Mare (1981)* projected an increasing dependence of educational attainment on social origins. *Resinger, Ora & Frangia (1976)* found that mothers from lower socio-economic classes were less able or willing to learn to intervene with their behaviour problem children. *Brantlinger (1985)* found that parental aspirations were affected by school reports of performance & that educational attainment was perceived by low-income parents as not necessarily enhancing chances for life success. (*Sewell, Haller & Onlendorf, 1969; Olneck & Bills 1980*) found that social class background had an effect on persistence in school. Students whose fathers had more schooling acquired more schooling.

Limitation of the study

Data was limited to 25 orthopaedically challenged women due to scarcity & unavailability. The data excluded may be severely in a negative state & need immediate identification & intervention by various research & research workers.

Objectives of the study

- To study the socioeconomic background of orthopaedically challenged women.
- To study the level of academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women.
- To study the academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women in relation to parental education.
- To study the academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women in relation to income of the family.

Hypothesis

- **H1** : There is no significant difference between high income & low income groups in respect to their intelligence.
- **H2** : There is no significant difference between low academic achievement & high academic achievement in respect of family income.

- **H3** : There is significant relationship between academic achievement & intelligence of the orthopaedically challenged women.
- **H4** : There is significant relationship between mother's education & academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women.
- **H5** : There is significant relationship between father's education & academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women.
- **H6** : There is significant relationship between income of family & academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women.

Sample

25 orthopaedically challenged women were taken for the study by situational sampling technique from different schools in and around Kolkata. The mean age being 23 yrs. The nature of disability included all forms of orthopaedically challenged excluding the cerebral palsy. The severity of disability was 40% to 90% disabled as certified by the doctor.

Tools

- Socio-economic background (income, occupation, education) — schedule
- Ravens progressive matrices Test – To measure intelligence level.
- Academic achievement School & college record, information from the challenged.

Statistical treatment

- Median test
- Chi square
- Rank difference correlation

Results & Discussion

Table-I : Education of parents of the orthopaedically challenged

Level of education	Father (no. of cases & percentage) (N=25)	Mother (no. of cases & percentage) (N=25)
Post graduate & above	4 (16%)	1 (4%)
Graduation	7 (28%)	3 (12%)
School final – H.S.	2 (8%)	7 (28%)
Below school final	12 (48%)	14 (56%)

Data reveal that 48% of the father & 56% of the mother of the orthopaedically challenged have not at least completed their class X. (*Table-I*). Many were even illiterate. They mainly have low level of formal education.

Table-II : Income of family (per capita)

Income	No. of cases
High Income 18001 above 15001-18000	NA
Medium Income 10501-15000 7501-10500	1 (4%) 0
Low Income 4001-7500 1501-4000 1500 & below	5 (20%) 8 (32%) 11 (44%)

96% of the disabled persons belong to the lower income group. Large percentage of this population lives in rural or rurban areas (**Table-II**). It appears that poverty & low education were more common among the disabled. To this are added factors like nutrition deficiency during pregnancy, lack of money to treat the disability at an early stage & even lack of awareness of the treatment available.

Table-III : Intelligence of the orthopaedically challenged compared with in the group

Intelligence	No. of cases (N=25)
Relatively superior	3 (12%)
Relatively moderate	11 (44%)
Relatively inferior	11 (44%)

From the study it was estimated that 44% of the sample were of relatively inferior intelligence & the same relatively moderate & only 12% were of relatively superior intelligence (**Table-III**). Most of the orthopaedically challenged falls in the range relatively moderate to relatively inferior intelligence group.

Table-IV : Performance on the basis of X examination results

Scores in percentage	No. of cases (N=25)	Percentage
50% & above	6	24%
41%-49%	15	60%
40% & below	4	16%

About 60% of the orthopaedically challenged in the study were average achievers, only 20% were above average & 16% were below average achievers in the secondary examination organized by the West Bengal Board of Secondary Examination (**Table-IV**).

FINDINGS :**Table-V : Chi square distribution of the variables**

Variables	Chiequare valve	Level of significance	df
Inome & intelligence	.037	NS**	1
Income & Academic Achievement	.969	NS**	1

** Not significant at both the level

Table-VI : Rank difference correlation of the variables

Variables	Rank difference correlation	df	Level of significance
Academic achievement & intelligence	.49	23	Significant at .05
Academic achievement & Mothers educaiton	.41	23	Significant at .05
Academic achievement & fathers education	.33	23	NS**
Academic achievement & income	.3	23	NS**

** Not significant at both the levels

H1 retained : There is no significant difference between high income & low income groups in respect to their intelligence. (Table-VI)

H2 retained : There is no significant difference between low academic achievement & High academic achievement in respect of family income. (Table-VI)

H3 : There is significant relationship between academic achievement & intelligence of the orthopaedically challenged women. (Table-VII)

H4 : There is significant relationship between academic achievement & mother's education of the orthopaedically challenged women. (Table-VII)

H5 : There is no significant relationship between father's education & academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women. (Table-VII)

H6 : There is no significant relationship between income of the family & academic achievement of the orthopaedically challenged women. (Table-VII)

Conclusion :

- Academic achievement & intelligence of the orthopaedically challenged have positive correlation which is an established phenomenon & supported by many researchers. The present study reflects & strengthens the same.
- Education of the mother is one of the most important predictors of academic

achievement of the orthopaedically challenged. "One good mother is worth a hundred school masters." It has been observed from the study that if the mother is educated she tries her level best to get her ward educated even in the midst of extreme poverty.

- Though income of the family is one of the most important factors which may have tremendous effect on the academic achievement of the ward, the study shows it is not always the fact. With desirable help from neighbors, relatives or other financial aids the educational need can be met to large extent. It was found that society have a sympathetic attitude towards the challenged thus other people many a times lay various helping hand in their achievement. So it was found that even without any financial support from family many of them have achieved miracles with their own efforts with the desire to achieve with some help from others.

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ARTICLE SECTION

Right to Education—A Review

*Sridipa Sinha**

Every country dreams of a fully literate population, even though it has to be ensured through legislative measures. Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) has been accepted as a national goal in India since Independence. The original Indian Constitution recognised UEE as a crucial input for nation building included in the Directive Principles to be implemented within a period of ten years. In the original constitution Article 45 stated that :

“The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.”

The National Education Policies have reiterated the constitutional directive. The National Policy on Education, 1986, provided that “free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality shall be provided to all children upto the age of 14 years before we enter the 21st century.” The Programme of Action (POA), 1992 outlined various strategies for achieving this goal.

The colonial regime prior to our Independence in 1947 established a system of education that had limited access and denied mass education. It gave greater emphasis on conformism to socio-political and economic systems of the country during that time. Macaulay explicitly stated that the objective of the education system was to create a new breed of Indians as similar to Europeans as possible. It was on account of this that the Indian National Education Movement developed a strong critique of the British Education System that only imparted ‘learning skills’ and not ‘life skills’ and that did not respect Indian traditions. The National Education Movement also expressed the global sentiment of education for all. Gopal Krishna Gokhale’s Compulsory Primary Education Bill reflected the spirit of India’s freedom movement.

The imperatives of the Colonial Education Policy promoted alternatives, notable being Mahatma Gandhi’s ‘Basic Education’ and Rabindranath Tagore’s approach of education for self development, reflected through Shantiniketan. Dr. Zakir Hussain’s trust on Nai Talim was also based on Gandhiji’s philosophy of ‘education for life’. Gandhiji emphasized ‘self-supporting’ scheme of education and also stressed that education must promote respect for manual labour rather than abhorrence for it.

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Education as a Fundamental Right

The farvour for freedom and patriotism to achieve self-supporting education, made our leaders search for an alternative approach to elementary education. Article 41 and 45 of the Constitution enunciating the Directive Principles of State Policy on education provided the basis for new approach. The Supreme Court in its judgement in Unni Krishnan, J.P. Vs Andhra Pradesh, 1992 has held that : “The citizens of the country have a fundamental right to education. The said right flows from Article 21 of the Constitution. The right is, however, not an absolute right. Its contents and parameters have to be determined in the light of Articles 45 and 41.”

The 86th Amendment (December, 2002) of the Constitution includes the following changes.

Article 21A : Right to Education : The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6-14 years, in such a manner as the State may, by law determine.

Article 45 : Provision for Early Childhood Care and Education to Children below the Age of 6 years : The state shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.

Article 51A : Clause ‘K’ has been added in 51A Fundamental Duties : It shall be the duty of every citizen of India who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be ward between the age of 6 and 14 years.

15 States and 4 Union Territories enacted Legislation for free and compulsory primary education. All State Governments have abolished tuition fees in Government schools upto upper primary level. Education in Schools run by local bodies and private aided institutions is also mostly free. However, compulsion has not been enforced due to various socio-economic and cultural factors as well as adminstrative and financial constraints.

Policies and Planning for UEE

The thrust of the Central and State Governments in universalizing elementary education so far has been on three aspects namely, universal access, universal retention and universal achievement.

The NPE, 1986 recommended the need for quality improvement in terms of learning achievement of children. As a result, greater efforts have been made to impart competency based learning, particularly from 1990 when the Minimum Levels of Learning (MLLs) were introduced. The period after Independence saw a linear expansion of the elementary education system through allocation of additional resources. The Kothari Commission 1964-66, recommended a radical transformation in the prevailing education system and highlighted the need for the “common school approach” to promote equity and social justice. The NPE, 1968 recommended free and compulsory elementary education and equalization of educational opportunities especially for girls and children belonging to SCs and STs. The NPE, 1968 and its POA, 1992 resolved to achieve UEE by 2000 AD. The Central Government increased its allocations for elementary education after 1976 when education became a concurrent subject.’

The period following the adoption of NPE, 1986 saw the introduction of a number of centrally sponsored schemes to cater to the specific needs of the elementary education sector. These included Operation Blackboard to improve school environment, enhance retention and learning achievement of children by providing minimum essential facilities in all primary schools. District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) for restructuring and strengthening of Teacher Education. Non-Formal Education Programmes (NFE) to provide alternative education facilities for girls, working children and children in far flung areas. Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) to improve learning achievements of children, and the National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary education, commonly known as Mid-day Meal Scheme, to provide nutritional support to children in primary classes.

Following the World Conference for Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien in March 1990, a major internationally assisted programme District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched in 1992 with assistance from World Bank and European Union. The programme adopts a holistic approach to promote primary education through decentralized planning and integrated programming at district level. The Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi Projects are two other successful internationally assisted projects. The decentralization of planning and management of School education to village Education Committees (VECs) and Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI) has been an encouraging feature of our efforts to universalize elementary education. The participation of NGO's together with community support has helped to improve the physical conditions and environment of elementary schools as well as promotion of education for girls and children belonging to SCs and STs and working children.

The scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched in 2001 to achieve the goal of UEE through a time bound integrated programme. Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education is an important component of SSA to bring out of school children in the fold of Elementary Education.

The SSA approved 44,719 new schools, 2,10,431 appointment of new teachers, 29,019 construction of school buildings, 82,538 additional class rooms, construction of 50,044 toilets and provision of Drinking Water for 44,322 schools, free textbook for 6.15 crore children, school Grant for 9,03,191 schools and teacher grant for 32,39,155 teachers against annual district elementary education plan for 598 districts.

DPEP has opened more than 1,60,000 new schools. The enrolment of girls has shown significant improvement. In DPEP I districts, the share of girls enrolment in relation to total enrolment has increased from 48% to 49% while this increase in the subsequent phases of DPEP districts has been from 46% to 47%. About 1,77,000 teachers, including para-teachers/ Shiksha Karmis have been appointed. About 3,380 resource centers at block level and 29,725 centres at cluster level have been set up for providing academic support and teacher training facilities. [India – 2006]

In spite of substantial achievements, the task of UEE is far from complete. Schools and enrolments have increased but alongwith it have increased the number of out of school children. The demand for quality education is increasing because of the organized efforts of the Total Literacy Campaigns and the Post Literacy Campaigns. The educational

administration in most places have to tackle the problems relating to shortage of teachers, inadequate and improperly designed school buildings, lack of teaching-learning equipment, need based teacher training, and a curriculum related to real life requirements.

The resolve of the Government to make elementary education a fundamental right of all children of 6-14 years is expected to spur both the Government and non-government agencies to take necessary measures to achieve UEE. Efforts of the Government to mobilize resources for education to the extent of 6% GDP will also help in achieving the goal of UEE.

In addition to this an impressive academic support system has been built up at national and state level through NCERT, NIEPA, NCTE, SCERTs, DIETs, BRCs and CRCs to provide technical support and guidance to the elementary education system. On the basis of this we hope the future of the UEE is bright and the target is reached satisfactorily.

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Universalization of Education: A Study in the Indian context

Manjusha Tarafdar

The stark reality of human society is in equality. In India, inequality of educational opportunities is a reality which existing for generations. In our ancient India education was the prerogative of the upper caste. In British India English education was for the elite class resulting in direct neglect of mass education. After independence we adopted the preamble of the constitution which emphasized on the equality of opportunities of all irrespective of caste, race, religion, sex and place of birth. But unfortunately inequality still exists.

In sphere of education some have no access to school while some have limited access. The nation at large is now firmly committed to provide education for all. Overriding priority to provide compulsory primary education, coverage of children with special needs, eradication of illiteracy, education for women's equal right are the major strategies to achieve the national goal of universalization of elementary education.

Education is the key to all process of development, catalytic action of education in this complex and dynamic growth process needs to be planned meticulously and executed with great sensitivity. Actually, education refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit, resulting in furthering the goal of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our constitution. So education is an instrument, for developing an economically prosperous society and for ensuring equity and social justice.

The National Policy on Education 1986 is a land mark in the history of Indian education as it visualized education as a dynamic and life long process, providing diversity of learning opportunities to all of the society. It stressed on the positive role of education in correcting social and regional imbalances in empowering women and securing rightful for linguistic and other minorities.

The nation is now firmly committed to provide education for all. Overriding priority to providing compulsory primary education, coverage of children with special needs, eradication of illiteracy, special focus on the education of SC or STs and Minorities are the major strategies to achieve the national goal of universalisation of elementary education (UEE), Actually universalisation of elementary education passes through 3 stages :—

Universal Provision

Universal Enrolment

Universal Retention.

As such, firstly, schools should be provided within walking distance of the child's home. Secondly all the children attaining the age of 6 must be enrolled in class-I and thirdly every child enrolled in class I must continue in school till he completes class VIII.

Therefore universalisation denotes two process—one is access and the other is success.

Elementary education is a fundamental right of every citizen. In a judgement in July 1992 and modified in 1993, the Supreme Court of India declared that the citizens of the country have a fundamental right to education. On the contrary the Constitution could not compel the Government and the Society to have universal elementary education and as a result even after so many years of independence in the 21st century the judgement of Supreme Court assume utmost significance. Universal access, universal retention and universal achievements are broad parameters to achieve universal elementary education. Consider the magnitude and the complexity of the problem, meticulously formulated strategies have been adopted in the form of Operation Black board (OB), Non-Formal Education (NFE) etc.

The new thrust in elementary education, as said in 1986 Policy, will emphasis 2 aspects:

- i. Universal Enrolment as well as retention fo children upto 14 years of age.
- ii. A substantial improvement in the quality of education.

The National Programme of Nutritional support to Primary Education is intended to boost enrôlment, attendance and retention in primary section and at the same time supplies nutritional requirements of the children. The scheme covers the children studying in primary classes in the Government, local body and Government aided schools throughout the country.

The District Primary Education Programme provides special importance to achieve Universalisation of Primary Education Programme (UPE) through decentralized planning and management, disaggregated target setting community mobilization district and population specific planning. The Programme aims at providing access to primary education for all children, reducing the gap among gender social groups, catering to the needs of special target groups like SCS, women and other marginalized sections.

In West Bengal, in recent years rapid and excellent efforts had been made for universal access and enrolment. In Calcutta proper, there are CMC, CMDA, Government and private elementary schools which are engaged in imparting education to a large number of children, yet it seems that universal provision has not been made or universal enrolment, which is the ultimate national goal has not yet been achieved. State Government has its policy on more and more enrollment of children in elementary schools, but a noble effort has not produced much.

The socio-economic cultural condition, illiteracy and lack of awareness on the part of the parents, lack of Government Policy regarding compulsory rule of enrolment and retention are the causes acting behind this present condition which should be given prior importance if we really want to eradicate illiteracy.

Invisible Violence

*Gargi Dutt**

“WIFE KILLED FOR UGLINESS”—Can you believe it? – in this 21st century? – yes, this was a news, a very recent news in a leading newspaper (27.03.2007 – Telegraph). The line speaks of itself and that shows where we stand although there is always a privileged group, an exceptional group which forms only a fraction of the globe.

One of the emerging concerns, along with health, communalism and increasing violence is the implication of media’s projection of women. The following media report on social conditioning of women is symptomatic — ‘Having craved a son for years, Sofia had been inconsolable when she gave birth to her third daughter. We went to shrines and approached saintly figures for their blessings so we would have a boy. When my wife delivered another daughter, the whole family was upset and Sofia was in deep shock’—(26.03.2008 – Telegraph). This is the way Our Society used to think. Even women themselves were so conditioned that they wanted sons and not daughters. Changes in social pattern have helped women think otherwise, though in a micro-level. The above mentioned example still exists and will continue to exist unless women start craving for daughters and not for sons alone.

The list below shows the sex ratio in the number of females for every 1000 males in that area —

Jammu and Kishmiar	:	925
Ladakh	:	944
Valley	:	939
Jammu	:	901
Delhi	:	821
Hariyana	:	861
Punjab	:	874
Sikkim	:	875

Male and Female population should have been equal, otherwise there would be a dearth of female in the society, the consequence of which is deplorable. There was a film which showed how a village without a single female member could be so ugly in its structure and function as well. Initially women groups were not in favour of reservation, infact, this item was not even on its agenda, but through experience they realized that the political parties would not on their own put up women as candidates, therefore they had no choice but to enter the debate of reservation and electoral policies.

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The movement has to deal with the violence on a woman's body, violence on her personality and violence of values. Killing of female foetuses, wide propaganda of use of harmful contraceptives, violence as represented in media, particularly cinema, beauty contests parading women's bodies, various measures by which a woman thinks of her body as an asset to earning hard cash, psychological explanation of the phenomenon of rape or wife battering are illustrations of acceptance of violence by the wider society.

Rape is not committed merely by a strong man but also by politicians, religious authorities, heads of educational institutions and family members.

The root of woman's oppression is an outcome of their social status. Gender crimes are not a recent phenomenon. Crimes against women have been committed since antiquity. Prejudice towards women is common in other societies. Women are devalued, subordinated and mistreated daily. According to the October 2002 W.H.O. report on violence and Health, it is estimated that interpersonal violence results in the death of one person every minute somewhere across the world.

Since independence there is undoubtedly an overall increase in the female literacy rates in the country. In 1951, the percentage of female literates was barely nine percent, while in 1991 it has gone to about 40 percent, though compared to males the picture is still not bright.

Whereas Literacy and elementary education fulfil social and human development needs and become instruments of better health and for income generation, the higher education of women promotes social and occupational mobility and leads to intellectual and personal development, quite often resulting in generating elitist culture. Thus higher education is seen as a crucial step in personal, familial and societal mobility.

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